



FROM THE LIBRARY OF  
REV. LOUIS FITZGERALD BENSON, D. D.  
BEQUEATHED BY HIM TO  
THE LIBRARY OF  
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Division

SCD

Section


2744

→ 2146 no. 2154 St ←









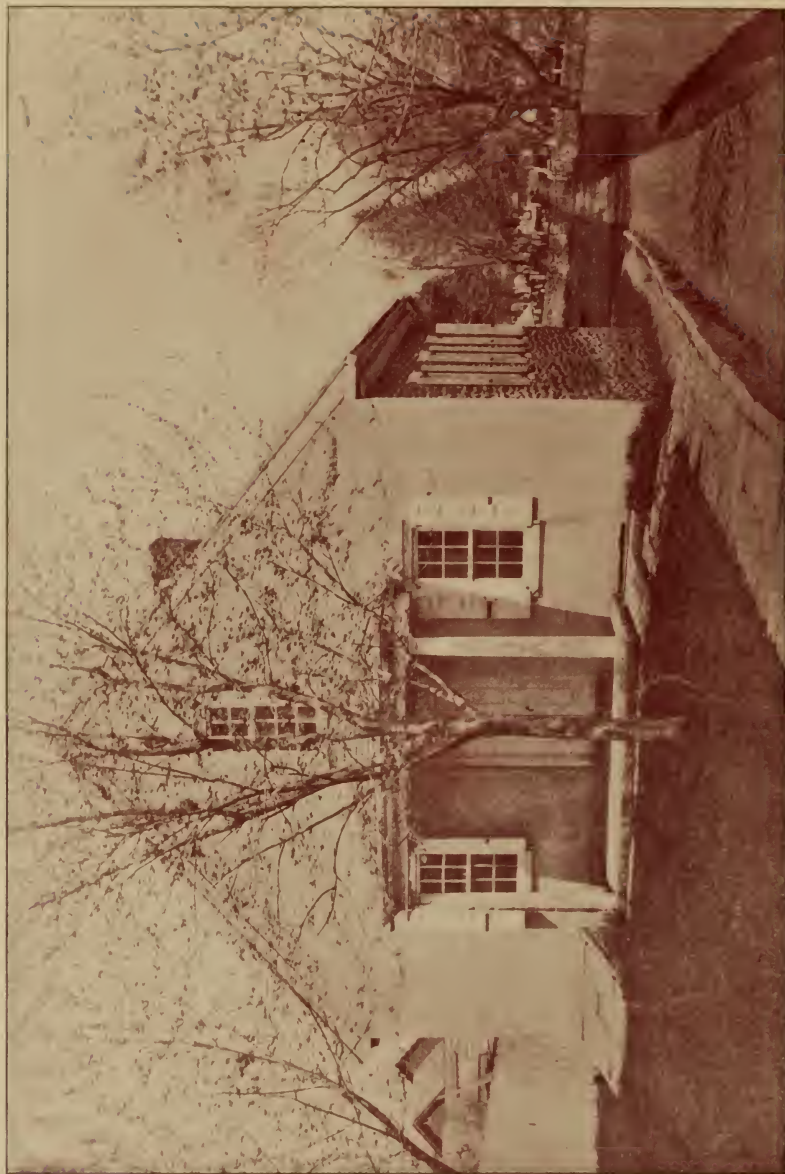
Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2012 with funding from  
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

<http://archive.org/details/hisgermanb00falk>





THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN, GERMANTOWN.  
AS IT APPEARED ABOUT 1860 (ERECTED 1770).



History  
of the  
German Baptist Brethren  
Church

(Reprinted from PENNSYLVANIA-GERMAN SOCIETY ANNUAL, 1900)

BY ✓

GEORGE N. FALKENSTEIN

Pastor Brethren Church, Germantown, Pennsylvania

LANCASTER, PA.  
THE NEW ERA PRINTING COMPANY  
1901





## DEDICATED

To the memory of our Spiritual Ancestors with the hope  
that their self-sacrificing devotion may be a constant inspiration  
unto us who have entered into their labors,

BY THE AUTHOR.



## PREFACE.

**H**ISTORY has always been a most attractive field to me for study and investigation. The most important and helpful phase must ever be the Philosophy of History. When I became pastor of the Mother Church at Germantown, eight years ago, I had as fair a knowledge of the History of the Brethren as could be gained from our scanty records. I never dreamed of the wealth of historical data that, lying hidden and buried, awaits the faithful investigator. As soon as I was fairly settled in my charge and began to breathe the historic associations of my surroundings, I entered with enthusiasm upon the study of the History of the Brethren Church. I was distressed to find the facts of our history so scattered and that practically the sources were utterly inaccessible to our people. Many visitors came to look upon the old scenes and were invariably interested in my recitals of the History of the place. I was pressed for years by friends to publish my information and investigations. But not having the means nor time to prepare for publication, I purposed to accumulate the facts. I however wrote some and delivered a number of historical addresses from time to time. I diffused largely the knowledge I had gained in this way, and had many inquiries by letter, asking many questions and through my extended correspondence much of my information found its way into print. The result was a historical awakening all around and an increased demand that I write our history. When I could not, others entered into my labors.

When the request to write came from the Executive Committee of the Pennsylvania-German Society, I could no longer refuse. The sketch herewith was published in the Society's annual volume of 1900. It here appears as a *reprint* at the earnest request of many friends. These friends have been a constant encouragement to me in my labors, and I herewith express my sincere thanks.

I must also thank Mr. Julius F. Sachse for the work of illustrating, so successfully done.

No one is more conscious than I of the imperfection of this sketch, because of incompleteness in working out historical details. I have, however, faithfully labored to have this account as free from error as possible, and I sincerely believe that the careful reader will recognize this fact. This account was written in the midst of many exacting duties and I wish to acknowledge the assistance of my faithful wife in the preparation of the manuscript for publication.

With the sincere hope and prayer that it may do some good, I now commit this little volume.

G. N. FALKENSTEIN.

1901.

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
1. Brethren Church (Frontispiece)	
2. Brethren Church and Parsonage . . . . .	17
3. Title-page Alexander Mack's book . . . . .	18
4. Morris House, Germantown . . . . .	24
5. Interior Brethren Church . . . . .	24
6. The Old Market Square, Germantown . . . . .	25
7. Seal of Germantown, 1691. . . . .	28
8. An Ancient Germantown Grist Mill . . . . .	31
9. An Old Germantown Landmark. . . . .	38
10. Map Showing Baptistry. . . . .	40
11. The Baptistry on the Wissahickon. . . . .	41
12. Main Street, Germantown . . . . .	43
13. The Old Shumacher House . . . . .	51
14. Alleged Portrait of Beissel . . . . .	54
15. On Market Square . . . . .	62
16. Relics of Brethren Church . . . . .	63
17. Heidelberg, Germany, . . . . .	65
18. Grave Stone Alexander Mack . . . . .	69
19. Old Pine Cottage . . . . .	72
20. Relics of Brethren Church . . . . .	72
21. The Old "Monastery" . . . . .	73
22. The "Wyck" House . . . . .	80
23. Title of Hymn . . . . .	82
24. Baptismal Certificate . . . . .	89
25. The Livezey House . . . . .	104
26. "Woll-rad" . . . . .	105
27. "Faden-haspel" . . . . .	106
28. Spinning Wheel . . . . .	107
29. An Old Copper Plate . . . . .	108
30. Brethren Church and Parsonage . . . . .	113
31. New and Old Brethren Church . . . . .	113
32. Parsonage, built 1756. . . . .	114
33. Ancient Seals on Deeds . . . . .	120
34. Signatures, Declaration of Trust . . . . .	128
35. Signature Alexander Mack . . . . .	137
36. House of Johannes Mack . . . . .	134
37. In the Cemetery, Germantown . . . . .	137





## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	9
CHAPTER I. THE ORIGIN OF THE BRETHREN. The Name. Story of the Reformation. German Pietism . . . . .	11-16
CHAPTER II. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BRETHREN. Schwartz- enau. Practice of Primitive Christians Persecution and Pov- erty . . . . .	17-24
CHAPTER III. THE FIRST EMIGRATION TO AMERICA. A Period of Persecution. Alexander Mack, an Evangelist. Seeking Religious Freedom. Religious Differences . . . . .	25-30
CHAPTER IV. GATHERING THE "FIRST FRUITS" IN AMERICA. December 25, 1723. The roll. The Love-feast . . . . .	31-37
CHAPTER V. GROWTH OF THE CONGREGATION. Celebrating his Birthday. Immediate Results. Religious Activity. A Mes- sage to the Home Land . . . . .	38-42
CHAPTER VI. MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE IN THE BRETHREN CHURCH. A Missionary Tour to Frontier Points. Coventry Brethren. Conestoga. Return to Germantown. Lessons and Results. The Home a Sanctuary . . . . .	43-50
CHAPTER VII. THE SECOND EMIGRATION. Dark Days and Trials of Fire. Conrad Beissel. His Wanderings. An Apprentice. Befriended. His Ingratitude. His New and Strange Doc- trines . . . . .	51-61
CHAPTER VIII. ALEXANDER MACK. Birth. Occupation. Mar- riage. Life-work. His Character. His Death and Resting- place. His Seal Discovered . . . . .	62-71
CHAPTER IX. THE REACTION. Elder Peter Becker. His Stead- fastness. Alexander Mack, Jr. Koch's Visions . . . . .	72-79
CHAPTER X. EARLY CONGREGATIONS. Germantown. Great Swamp. Abraham Duboy. Coventry. Oley. Cocalico. Conestoga. Whiteoakland. Great Swartaro. Little Swar- taro. Northkill. Codorus. Little Conewago. Conewago. Bermudian. Stony Creek . . . . .	80-103

CHAPTER XI. INDUSTRIAL LIFE. Home Industry. A Type. A Bee-hive of Industry . . . . .	104-112
CHAPTER XII. THE MOTHER CHURCH AT GERMANTOWN. The Unwritten History. History of the Present Location. Untruthful Accounts. Original Deeds Quoted. Unique Documents. Deed of Trust. The Old Folks' Home. The Old Church. The Weaver Log-house. The Select School. The Cemetery. Alexander Mack, Jr. Baptismal Records. Mack Family . . . . .	113-140
APPENDIX. . . . .	141-152
PART A. FAITH AND PRACTICE . . . . .	141-148
PART B. CHURCH GOVERNMENT . . . . .	148-150
PART C. STATISTICS . . . . .	150-151
PART D. EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS . . . . .	151
PART E. MISSIONARY FIELDS AND FOREIGN WORK . . . .	151



## INTRODUCTION.



**I**N our complex modern life, it is a wonder if we can stop for a moment and look back upon the simplicity of long ago. Surrounded by luxurious extravagance, we cannot realize the narrow limits of life and the constant self-sacrificing circumstances of our common ancestry. To-day, as we look at this great Commonwealth of ours, some men are impressed with its magnificent proportions and are charmed with its gilded dome. Some there are who look upon it merely as so much political machinery with immense possibilities for the advancement of personal ends. But it is more than a political spider web—more than a social compact or civil alliance with repellent national prejudices. It has a history. It is no longer an English settlement on the Delaware—it is no longer Penn's province. It is more than the dying cadence of strains of martial music—more than a relic of colonial days.

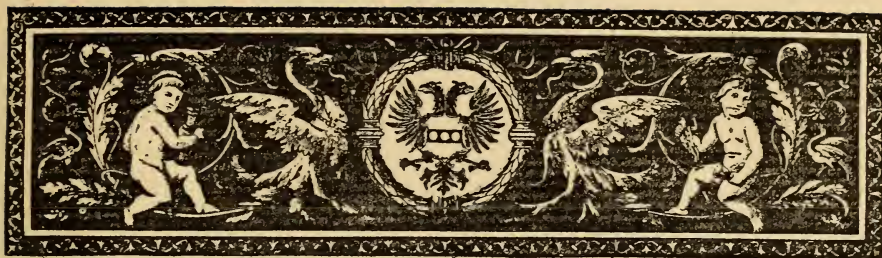
It is a building with foundations and superstructure. The builders were building in the century that is past. In

times of political upheaval and civil strife—and in times when the storms that try men's souls were raging, the building has given evidence of endurance and extraordinary strength. The members of the Pennsylvania-German Society have assigned to themselves the pleasant duty of telling to the world the history of the German influence in the foundation and development of this building, so remarkable for security, strength and beauty. We have cleared away much of the rubbish. We have examined the marks and inscriptions on the walls, and the interpretation of them has been an astonishment. There have been discoveries as real as those in the Babylonian excavations. The foundation stones tell the story of the integrity, industry, devotion and the virtues of faith and hope and love of our German ancestors.

We honor ourselves in the study of the measure of influence of the religion of our fathers, whose love for the home was more perfect because of love to God, and whose faith in life was more constant because of faith in Him. When we understand better the far-reaching influence of that pious devotion, we shall grow in appreciation of the rich legacy of our inheritance.

Thanking you for the recognition, that the Brethren church has been a factor in Pennsylvania history, I trust that a historical sketch of this people will show that they have also contributed elements of strength to our beloved Commonwealth.





## CHAPTER I.

### THE ORIGIN OF THE BRETHREN.



AN account of frequent confusion, it is well to notice the name in passing. The name first selected was "The Brethren," and this has always remained the choice above all others, but to distinguish us from other denominations and to give recognition to our origin, the legal corporate title is "The German Baptist Brethren." If the reader desires, however, to be intelligent upon the subject, it is necessary to remember that there are several localisms and terms of contempt which came into more or less prominence in the early history of the denomination. Thus the words "Dunker" and "Tunker," and their plurals, come from *dunken* or *tunken*, meaning to dip, or immerse. These, of German origin, are of frequent occurrence and correct enough; *Dunker*, being smoother than *Tunker*, is preferred. *Die Dunker* is familiar to many. "German Baptist" is legally sanctioned and is much used, Baptist being derived from the Greek verb *baptizo*, to immerse. The word "Dunkard," or "Dunkards," is used by two classes of persons. The first, those who are



either too ignorant to know or do not care for the laws of language; and, secondly, by those who do know and want to use it with its true meaning of contempt. According to the laws of language the word "Dunkard" is a hybrid, and, therefore, should not be used by anyone who desires good English. The root is derived from the German, *dunken*, and the suffix, *ard*, is from the French and always carries with it the idea of contempt, in such words as blackard, drunkard, laggard, etc. The word "Dunkard," therefore, should be used only by the ignorant and the malicious. There are other names, localisms of earlier times, not used now.

For the origin of the Brethren church, we must go back to the German Fatherland, the place of so many scenes of religious devotion and conflict. For, as a religious country, Germany stands unique, and in the summing up of its religious interests and activities, is without parallel in the annals of history—the length of time of its religious history, its extreme and diversified character of doctrine, its orthodoxy and heterodoxy, its mysticism, rationalism and materialism, its bitterness of ecclesiastical antagonism, at times, its blind following of dogma, and, at other times, its activity in a sincere and pious and intelligent devotion to Christianity. These things will always mark Germany as a vast and most fruitful field for the student of church history. In this land, the home of the Reformation, and in the midst of this history and these surroundings, was born the Brethren church.

It is to be sincerely hoped that the day is not far distant when some earnest German student and investigator will give us a complete and intelligent history of the times and conditions and circumstances that contributed to the birth and development of the new denomination, but a few facts



and dates must suffice as a proper introduction to that part of the history assigned to the present writer.

The story of the Reformation is a marvelous one. The intense activity and wonderful progress of the reform influences stirred to the very utmost the antagonism of the Catholic church. To counteract the influences of the Reformation and to stop its rapid progress throughout northern Europe, the Catholic church concentrated its entire energy to the development and spread of Jesuitism. "Its object is not to lead souls to a life-giving communion with their Saviour, but only to secure obedience to the Church and to increase the adherents to the Papacy." It seems sad to contemplate what a great change had been brought about in a hundred years from the time of the Reformation. The organized power of the church had been brought into requisition. Is it too strong a picture to quote the words of Baur: "A century after the Reformation, and even earlier, Germany presented a mournful spectacle. Jesuitism pressed like an incubus on the national mind, and even when Luther's teaching still prevailed, it was forgotten that the Christian calling consists of sincere faith, and of a life which originates therein. Even in the Protestant church faith was in danger of becoming a mere intellectual assent; pure doctrine had assumed the form of law; there was a zeal in the defense of it with which zeal for a life of love did not keep pace." The existence of such extreme conditions must soon produce a reaction of far-reaching and permanent results. We do not have to wait long for the change. Out of the darkness two powerful voices were heard. In due time all Germany listens to their earnest exhortations. The first of these was Johann Arndt (b. 1555; d. 1621), the pious author of *True Christianity* (Wahres

Christenthum), popular still, after a lapse of 300 years. The second was Jacob Boehme (b. 1575; d. 1624), a dreamer and noted mystic writer, and perhaps the father of the mystic philosophy of the 17th century. There was profound interest taken in the writings of these two men, and the results produced were as diversified as the doctrines they advocated. There began a new era of agitation and spiritual unrest and the ecclesiastical power was ready to punish all who dared to express their convictions at vari-

Des Geiſt und Troſtreichen Lehrers,  
Herrn Johann Arndts,  
Wol. General-Superintendentens des Chriſtenthums  
Hildburg,  
Sämmtliche Geiſtreiche Bücher  
Vom Wahren  
**Chriſtenthum,**  
Kortich von  
heilſamer Buſſe / herzlichder Reu und Leid über die Sünde  
und wahren Glauben / auch heiligem Leben und Wandel  
der rechten wahren Chriſten.  
Nicht allein mit beygefügen Gebeten / Zimmerschangen / Lebens-  
lauf des Awacs, und wichtigen Regiſtern:  
Erdern auch  
mit erbaulichen Sanftbüchern und deren Erklärung,  
und einer Katechetiſchen Einleitung von 288. Fragen  
verſehen.  
Trägt dem  
**Paradies-Gärtlein;**  
in neuen Druck  
Und einigen beſondern Regiſtern / vermittelſt welcher man  
dieses Buch auf alle Sonn- und Feſttag, Evangelia und Epistol  
als ein ordentliches Dase, Preben- Buch wol gebrauchen kan;  
vermehrte.

Gießen / Beiſige Erhardus Petrich Cammer.  
1742

ance with the doctrines of any of the three established churches. While there was cold, ritualistic formality, there was some active piety, and there was also some wild religious excess by those who used religion as a cloak for their maliciousness. In the midst of this restless confusion, in the latter half of the 17th century, there came upon the scene of action many sincere and devoted men and great leaders of thought. They were Pietists in principle, in the better sense, and had much to do in moulding the thought and doctrine of their generation and the succeeding century.

After all discussion *pro* and *con*, it must be admitted that Philip Jacob Spener (b. 1635; d. 1705) was the father of "Pietism," in its better sense. Though he remained in communion and fellowship with the Lutheran church, his energies were devoted to the promulgation of the best

thoughts and conceptions of "Pietism." Another leader that has enriched the world by his practical piety and benevolence was August Hermann Francke (b. 1663; d. 1727), the father and founder of the famous Halle Institutions—the Halle Orphanage, educational institutions and publishing house. As an estimate of these two men, I can do no better than quote the clear and concise statement of a German scholar and historian: "The Pietism of Spener and Francke was a religion of the heart, a faith which was to make a new creature. It sought entrance into the heart to cleanse it by repentance, and to create in it a new life of faith; it sought entrance into the houses, to turn them into sanctuaries, into schools to transfer the doctrines of the catechism from the head to the heart, and into the abodes of poverty to offer the consolations of the Gospel."<sup>1</sup> Such was Pietism in its best sense, in the church, but unappreciated by cold and unyielding orthodoxy. It was driven out of the church. Leaders of thought were by no means agreed as to faith and doctrine. All had their following. To the above might be added the names of Jeremias Felsing (b. 1616; d. —); Gottfried Arnold (b. 1666; d. 1714); Ernst Christoph Hochmann von Hochenau (b. 1670; d. 1721); and many others, each one earnest, and no doubt a firm believer in the doctrine he advocated; sharing the love of their friends and followers, and the hate of their enemies; and each one contributing his share towards the breaking up of the stony and unfruitful fields of orthodoxy. Many sincere men felt that corruption and error existed in all three of the established churches—Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed—and that such corruption can be cleansed and error corrected, only by infusion of piety and spiritual life—a life of faith and practical benevolence. They

<sup>1</sup> WILLIAM BAUR, *Religious Life in Germany*.

hoped to succeed by a kind of destructive method, but failed to gauge the strength of the ecclesiastical power.

It required brave men to stand up and say that the church needed to be reformed, and the greater the boldness of the declaration, the more the church resented such declarations. There was antagonism, dismissal, retaliation and bitter strife. Such were some of the conditions from within. And some who escaped from the ritualism and the oppression of ecclesiastical power, went wild in the other extreme, and declared against all organization and all ordinances. There were lawless men, and so Pietism was regarded as a strange aggregation of all religions and irreligion. Persecution was rife. Civil and ecclesiastical powers combined to mete out just and unjust punishment to the guilty and the innocent. Many sincere and earnest souls suffered untold hardships and punishment and torture. Many turned away into rationalism and unbelief. But there were braver souls than all these, in whose hearts burned the unquenchable desire for deeper spiritual life. They had sought in vain in the church, and turned away with other Pietists only to find themselves still unsatisfied and un comforted. They saw the whole field of chaos, strife and confusion, but they had hope in their hearts and they saw the dawn of the coming day. They bravely faced their persecutors, turned to the Bible for comfort and in earnest prayer to the Lord for guidance. Among these were those in whose history we are especially interested.—*Earnest Seekers After the Truth.*







BRETHREN CHURCH AND PARSONAGE, GERMANTOWN.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BRETHREN.



NOTICE of this organization, it would be impossible for me to give a better description than that given us by eye-witnesses, mostly by Alexander Mack, Sen., the first minister and organizer of the Brethren church as now constituted. This account was originally published as a Preface to a small edition of Alexander Mack's *Exposition and Defense of New Testament Doctrine*. This exposition was first circulated (probably in manuscript) in July, 1713; a German edition was printed in America in 1774; an English edition followed in 1810; and an English and German edition in 1860. Strange to say the book has been out of print for many years, and copies of the earlier editions are now very rare. I quote from the edition of 1810:

“It pleased God in the beginning of the last century to cause his saving grace to be experienced, and the voice of his mercy to be heard by many, stirring them up to repentance, and awakening them from the sleep and death of

Kürze und einfältige Vorstellung  
der äußern, aber doch heiligen

# Rechten

und

## Gründungen

des

## Hauses Gottes

Wie es der wahre Haus-Vater  
Jesus Christus befohlen, und in sei-  
nem Testament schriftlich hinterlassen.

vorgestellt in einem Gespräch  
unter Vater und Sohn,

durch

Frage und Antwort,

von

Alexander M u d d.

einem Mitarbeiter, zu dem grossen  
Abendmahl.

Zweite Auflage.

G e r m a n s o w n,

gedruckt u. zu finden bey Christoph Sauer, 1774.

Eberhard Ludwig Grubers

Grundforschende

# Frage

welche denen

## neuen Täufern

im Wittensteinischen, insonder-  
heit zu beantworteten vorgelegt waren,

antwort:

hingesetzten Fragen und einfältigen An-  
worten auf dieselben, vormals schriftlich  
heraus gegeben von einem

## Aufrichtigen Mitglied

der Gemeinde zu Wittenstein,

und nun auf vieles Verlangen

zum öffentlichen Druck befördert.

Zweite Auflage.

G e r m a n s o w n,

gedruckt und zu finden bey Christoph Sauer

1 7 7 4.



sin to seek salvation and permanent rest in Jesus, who, viewing at the same time the general defection and departure from the genuine principles of Christianity? and feeling their minds devoutly pressed, and inclined to bear a testimony to the truth; and for this purpose private meetings were established, for the edification and building up of the newly awakened souls; this laudable undertaking, which however soon powerfully opposed by the jealous and embittered ecclesiastics, influencing the earthly power and commencing a series of persecution in various places, namely: in Switzerland, in Wurtemberg, in the Palatinate and at Hesse Cassel, where they were cast out as exiles; but the Lord provided for them a place of rest, or security, in Wittgenstein, under the protection of a prince, eminent for his moderation, where also the awakening power of God had previously found its way to the hearts of some honorable females of his court; there at a place called Schwartzenau, in the vicinity of Berlenberg, liberty of conscience was graciously afforded them. Wittgenstein, though a rough and barren country, by becoming the place of refuge to the awakened, who now very generally resorted to Schwartzenau, became in the course of a few years a place of considerable repute, though otherwise little thought of.

“Of the number that collected here, there were few of different opinions, habits and manners; they were all denominated Pietists, but they considered each other as brethren; here circumstances very soon occurred which led to conclude that the salutatory counsel of our Lord, Matthew 18, ‘if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone, etc.,’ is not acceptable, or practicable, where a fraternity is unorganized by obedience to the truths of the gospel; here also some turned back

again to the religion from whence they came out, being offended at the discipline of the cross ; others fostered a spirit of libertinism, more to be dreaded in its consequences than their former depravity ; there were some, however, who, notwithstanding this state of perturbation, were sincerely desirous of finding the footsteps of the primitive Christians and following and imitating the example of Jesus Christ ; and apprehend and appreciate the testimony and commands of the head of the Church ; being fully convinced of the necessity of faith and obedience, in order to the obtaining salvation ; their solicitude paved the way to the discovery of the ordinance of baptism, which they considered as the door to that union and organization which they earnestly desired. The subject of baptism underwent various discussions among the Pietists and spoken of in such manner as to grieve the hearts of lovers of truth.

“Till in the year 1708, eight persons entered into a covenant with each other, by the help of God, to endeavor to attain to the answer of a good conscience by rendering obedience to all the commands of the Lord Jesus and follow him as their good shepherd and leader through good and evil report. Those eight persons, of whom five were brethren, and three sisters (the names of the Brethren were as follows : George Graby and Lucas Fetter, of Hesse Cassel ; Alexander Mack, of Schreisheim, in the Palatinate ; Andrew Bony, of Basle, in Switzerland, and John Kipping, from Wurtemberg ; and the names of the sisters were Johanna Bony, Anna Margaretta Mack and Johanna Kipping), covenanted with each other as brethren and sisters under the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, to dwell together in the unity of faith, as a society ; by consulting history, they found that the primitive Christians in the first and second centuries uniformly were according to

the command of Christ planted into the likeness of his death by a baptism in water by a three-fold immersion; not resting their faith however upon the authority of history, they searched the scriptures of the New Testament, and finding explicit testimony to that import, they became desirous of practicing a means so strongly recommended by the example of our Lord, and emphatically enjoined by his written precept, believing that it became them thus to fulfill all righteousness.

“But who should now administer the ordinance to them was a difficulty not soon got over. One of their number, who labored among them in the Word, visited the societies in different parts of Germany to collect the opinion of the awakened generally upon the subject of baptism; the greater number acknowledged that immersion was the mode practiced by the Apostles and primitive Christians, but still endeavoring to satisfy themselves that a handful of water by pouring would answer the same end, provided it was administered to proper subjects only.

“The consciences of the before-mentioned could, however, find no satisfaction in these; they therefore desired him who was their minister to baptize them by immersion, according to the example and practice of the first and best Christians and all primitive believers. He felt a diffidence to comply with their request on account of his not being baptized himself; he desired, therefore, first to be baptized before he could conscientiously baptize any of them. They betook themselves to fasting and prayer, in order to obtain help and direction in this case from Him who is the restorer of paths to dwell in, for they were all desirous to be baptized. In this dilemma a testimony of Scripture revived in their minds: ‘Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst.’ Where-

fore, with an unshaken confidence in the precious promise of God, they cast lots which of the four brethren should baptize him who was so anxiously desirous of being baptized; they pledged their word at the same time that it should remain a secret upon whom the lot fell, that no one might take occasion to call the society by the name of any man, as was the case with the Corinthian church, which was sharply reproved by the apostle.

“The crisis for the camp to move forward was now arrived; they were now made willing in the day of the Lord’s power. Accordingly, they went out in the morning to a stream called the Aeder, and there he upon whom the lot had fallen baptized the brother who had discovered so great anxiety to submit to that ordinance; this being done, he was now acknowledged as duly qualified. He baptized him first by whom he had been baptized, and the remaining three brethren and three sisters. Thus were these eight, at an early hour in the morning, baptized in the water by a triune immersion; and after they came up out of the water and had changed their clothes, they were filled with joy, and by the grace of God this expression was revived in their minds with peculiar energy: ‘Be ye fruitful and multiply.’ This is recorded to have occurred in the before-mentioned year, without reference to month or day.

“After this evidence of their love to God, by obeying his command, they were powerfully strengthened and encouraged to bear testimony for the truth in their public meetings, to which the Lord added His blessing, and believers were more and more obedient, so that in the short space of seven years their society became numerous, not only at Schwartzenau, but also at divers places in the Palatinate. A society was likewise formed at Marienborn, to



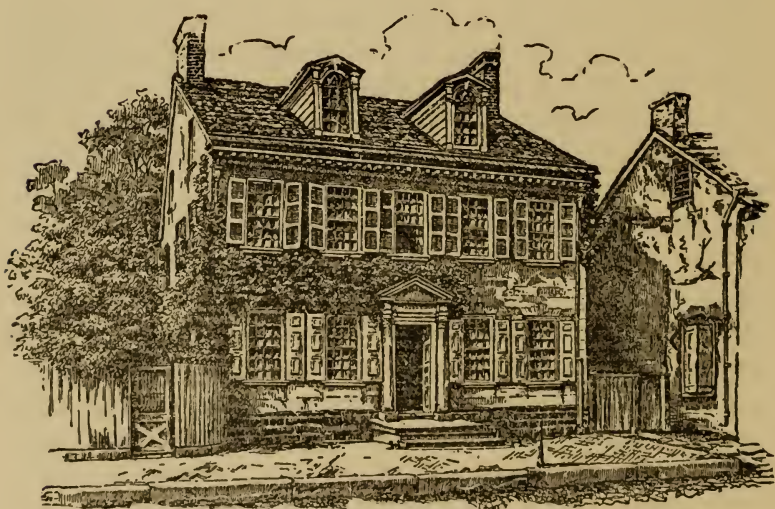
which the awakened from the Palatinate attached themselves, for in endeavoring to form a society for themselves, they were persecuted and banished. And even at Marienborn their external privileges were soon blasted, for as the light diffused itself the truth spread, and their numbers increased; it excited alarm and envy; persecution arose; they were driven out as exiles, and under the direction of providence found an asylum at Crefeldt, under the jurisdiction of the King of Prussia.

“Within this short space of time, it pleased God to awaken many laborers among them, and send them into His vineyard, whose names and places of abode are as follows: John H. Kalklöser from Frankenthal; Christian Libe and Abraham Dubois from Epstein; John Nass and others from the North; Peter Becker from Dilsheim; John H. Traut and his brothers; Henry Holtzappel and Stephen Koch; George B. Gantz from Umstadt, and Michael Eckertlin from Strassburg; the greater number of whom resorted to Crefeldt; some few, however, attached themselves to the society at Schwartzenu. But as they found favor with God and man, so enemies of the truth were found, and persecutions, because of the word, were instituted in divers places; here then were those who took joyfully upon them the spoiling of their goods; others experienced bonds and imprisonments for years, some also for shorter periods; one of their number was confined on board of the gallies, and coupled at the galling bar with execrable miscreants; from these distresses they in time were all conscientiously delivered, their lives being given unto them for a prey.

“The persecutions which they suffered, the poverty, tribulation and imprisonment that they experienced, only made them the more joyful, and they became prepared for new

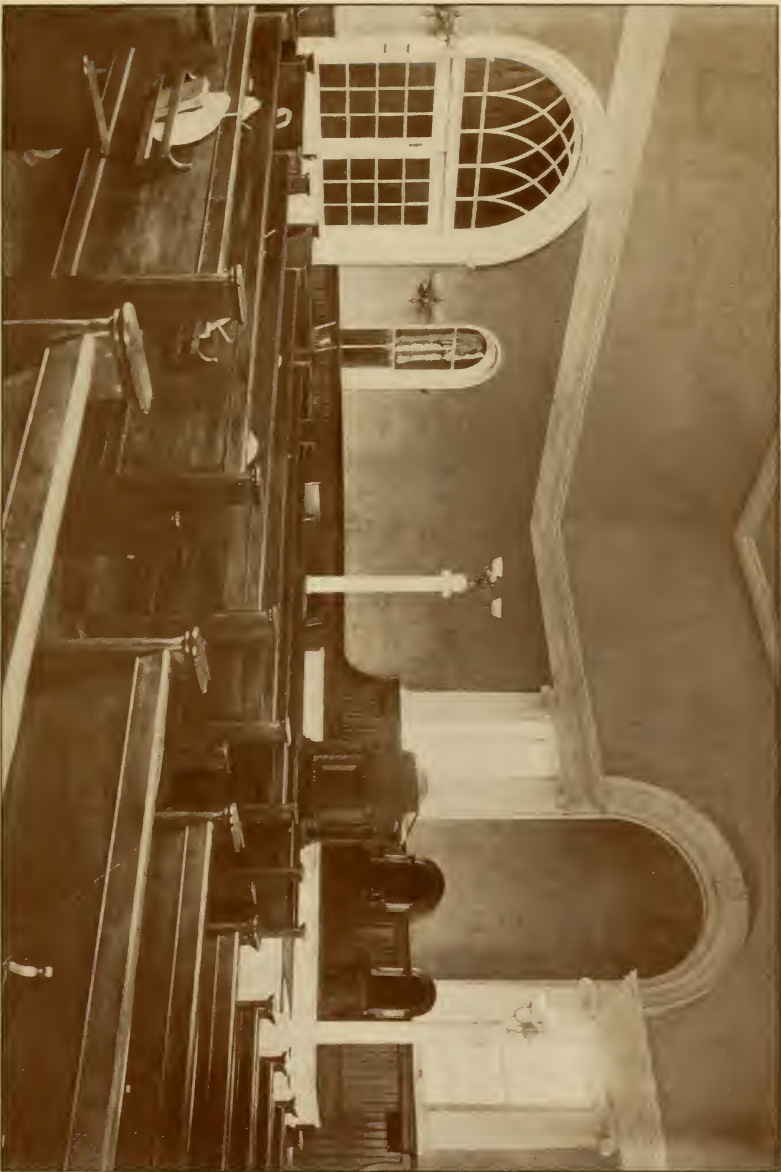
dispensations of trial; their graces were tried by being arraigned before another tribunal, men of learning and abilities proved them with hard questions, with a view to sap their steadfastness with questions to the number of forty, which the reader will find proposed, with their solutions towards the sequel of this treatise.

“About that time it was deemed expedient to issue this for the instruction of the uninformed, in which every impartial and unprejudiced reader will find sufficient matter connected with this Preface to justify the occasion of this production.”



THE MORRIS HOUSE, GERMANTOWN.

THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



J. F. SACHSE, PHOTO.

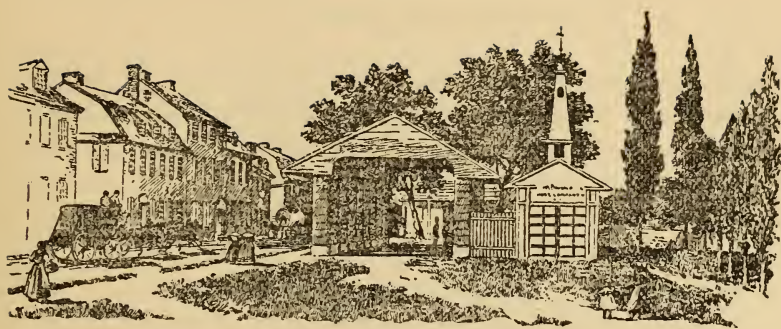
INTERIOR OF THE NEW CHURCH, GERMANTOWN.

DEDICATED MAY, 1897.

THE LARGE DOOR TO THE LEFT OPENS INTO THE OLD CHURCH.







THE OLD MARKET SQUARE IN GERMANTOWN.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE FIRST EMIGRATION TO AMERICA.—A PERIOD OF PERSECUTION.



HAT childlike faith and unfaltering trust !  
 Such pious devotion was the seed of a church. What self-forgetfulness ! It was early in the morning, in 1708 ; this is all we know. The day and the month are studiously avoided. They covenanted not to reveal the name of the one who baptized the leader, and they kept their vow ; we shall never know on whom the lot fell. They had travelled over Germany to collect the opinion of the awakened upon the subject of baptism, they had diligently searched history for Apostolic and primitive Christian practice, they prayerfully studied the New Testament ; there was but one conclusion. The crisis came and the camp moved forward. They knew the consequences but they faltered not. Alexander Mack was not the “ founder ” of the Brethren church as some say, but, being an evangelist of note, he was the natural leader and was chosen as the first minister. Blessing and prosperity followed the new

congregation, and converts were added in such numbers as to arouse the spirit of envy in the established churches ; opposition and persecution were at once instituted. The twenty-one years of the church's existence in Germany were eventful years. We know the struggle, but history is silent on many things we should like to know. The Schwartzenu congregation flourished and in seven years the society was numerous. There was a congregation established at Marienborn, to which the awakened from the Palatinate attached themselves. These members were all driven out as exiles, but found a refuge or asylum at Crefeld, under the jurisdiction of the King of Prussia, whence also came the congregation from Epstein. Notwithstanding fines and imprisonments, cast out of their homes, and driven from province to province, they increased in numbers constantly. They found temporary refuge in Prussia, Holland and Switzerland, but there was no promise of an abiding place anywhere. Their persecutors pressed them hard everywhere. Finally their hearts almost sank within them. Regretfully, they turned their eyes away from the beloved "Faderland" and looked wistfully, hopefully, to the land of promise in the New World. Brave souls those, who, in those days, could face the horrors of an ocean voyage, in unseaworthy, comfortless, death-breeding old hulks. But there was hope beyond, as an anchor to their souls. Did they not count the cost, nor measure the sacrifice? They could not realize all, but they trusted Him whom they followed, and for His sake they were willing to endure all things. The uncivilized Indian was to be preferred to the enemies at home, inhospitable shores to a land of persecution ; they would find some new friends for those they left behind, and at great sacrifice, they would have other homes for those of their childhood. The enjoyment

of religious liberty, in the "province of peace," would pay for all they leave behind, and all they should endure, and the darkness of the hour of the sacrifice of all things, proved to be just preceding the dawn of the day of their salvation.

And so was thrust out from a nation this people, and we have the unique example in history of the emigration of an entire religious denomination; but we shall see how their literature, their religious activity, their pious devotion and spiritual influence have enriched Pennsylvania history.

#### SEEKING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.



Crefeld was destined to furnish the first company of faithful for the voyage of faith. Here there had been many trials and scenes of persecution and many were now ready to do anything or go anywhere, so there was but the assurance of religious freedom and liberty of conscience. To these people the endearments of home remained only as a sad memory—they were all exiles and pilgrims among strangers and enemies. The story of this journey and voyage to America, so momentous in its results, is briefly told. The company consisted of about twenty families, it is said, and organized with Peter Becker as their leader. He was a minister at Crefeld and is known as a man gifted in prayer with earnestness and fervency, and as a sweet singer, but not noted as a preacher. They came in the year 1719; that is almost all

we know. The voyage is said to have been a stormy one, which is likely true. Landing at Philadelphia, the procession moved to Germantown, the place that was to be so inseparably connected with their future history. It would be exceedingly interesting to know the names of all of those that composed this company, but we must be satisfied with the names of those that sat at the love-feast and communion service, four years later.

The principal settlement was made in Germantown, while small settlements were made at distant points—some scattering to Skippack, Falckner's Swamp and Oley. There were new experiences awaiting these hardy pioneers, as they marched forth into the primeval forests. The reliance upon God, taught them in the school of bitter persecution,

no doubt served as their support and comfort in many a new trial and dark hour. They were face to face with a series of struggles. They were struggling to conquer the forest wilds, to make them fruitful fields. They were struggling to establish homes. They were struggling to adapt themselves to new and strange conditions and



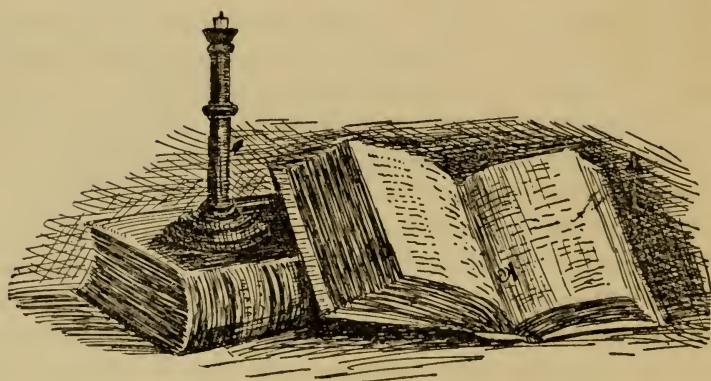
circumstances in life. And, above all, they were struggling to adjust religious differences and prejudices that marred their fellowship and prevented their united effort in Christian work. But Germantown was from the first the leading settlement and was destined to become the great center of



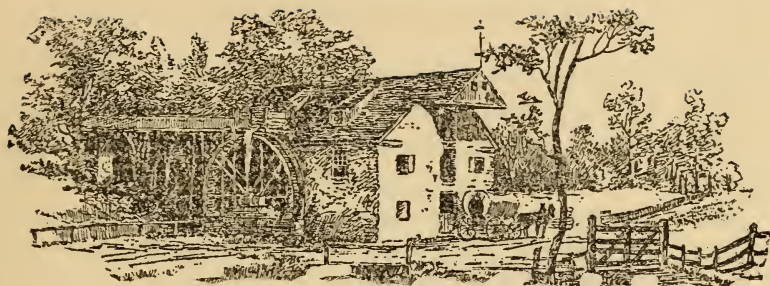
religious influence and activity for the next century and a half. It is readily understood, therefore, why Germantown and its great religious activities should receive special consideration, since the history of Germantown for the first one hundred years is really the history of the church. Here were the ablest ministers and the most gifted hymn-writers—from here came the Bibles and hymn-books and the greatest missionary enterprise.

It is sometimes sad to record the facts of history, and it may seem sad to some to record this fact of religious differences among the first Brethren in America, and the consequent first three years of spiritual drought. Historians have seized the opportunity of speaking of “jealousies and bickerings” among themselves, without stopping to consider reasons or results. In considering the religious condition at this time, it is necessary to make a careful inquiry into the cause or causes, in order that we may understand future results. To the careful student and the impartial investigator, it is gratifying to know that differences in views produced discord among them, or at least lack of full fellowship. It only proves that the real spirit of the Brethren church was at variance with the mystic influences and all kindred forms of error which some had absorbed in Germany. Crefeld was a general asylum for the persecuted and among the refugees all shades of belief obtained. Some of the Brethren did not wholly escape the influence of the disciples of Boehme. There was prolonged trouble in the Crefeld congregation. The members discussed their differences while crossing the ocean, and the agitation was kept up after they came here, and in fact, continued until some left the communion of the church. These things hindered the work for three years, and saddened many hearts, but the worst is yet to be told in the years to

come. There were earnest souls praying for relief from this spiritual famine, and the Lord soon answered in refreshing showers of spiritual awakening, and we are about to record a most important event in the religious history of Pennsylvania.



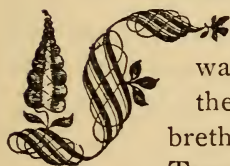




AN ANCIENT GERMANTOWN GRIST MILL.

## CHAPTER IV.

### GATHERING THE FIRST FRUITS IN AMERICA.



FOR several years after their arrival there was no religious effort made by them, but in the fall of 1722 several of the Germantown brethren—Becker, Gommere, Gantz and the Trauts—visited the scattered Brethren. In the fall of the following year there was an occurrence which finally bridged over their separation and brought them to organize themselves into a church. This event was the application of six “persons on the Schuylkill” for baptism. These “persons on the Schuylkill” lived thirty-five miles up the river, and comprised Martin Urner and his wife and four neighbors. This organization of the Germantown church and baptism of these first six converts took place on the 25th day of December, 1723.<sup>1</sup>

The *Chronicon Ephratense* gives the following account: “In August of the year 1723 a rumor was spread through the country that Christ. Libe, a famous Baptist teacher who had long been in the galleys, had arrived in Philadelphia. This moved some newly awakened persons

<sup>1</sup> See *Urner Family*, p. 9; Isaac N. Urner, LL.D., Philadelphia, 1893.

on the Schuylkill to go forth to meet him. The whole thing, however, was a fiction. These persons were persuaded by the Baptist (Brethren) to go with them to their meeting, during and after which they heard so much of the Germans' awakening that they went home very much edified. Soon after a second visit was made to Germantown, by which both parties were so much edified that the German Baptists (Brethren) promised them a visit in return, which they made four weeks afterwards with great blessing. The newly awakened ones were thereby stirred up still more, so that they begged to be received into their communion by holy baptism. This was the occasion of important proceedings among the Brethren in Germantown, for they still had in mind the misunderstandings which had arisen between them and their brethren at Crefeld. Besides, they were indeed a branch of a congregation, but yet not a congregation that dared to presume to administer the sacraments. The worst was that they were divided among themselves and had only lately commenced to draw nigh to one another again. After they had seriously pondered over all these things in the spirit they finally agreed to consent to the request. Accordingly, after the candidates for baptism had chosen Peter Becker as their baptizer, they were baptized in the stream Wiskohikung (Wissahickon), near Germantown, on December 25th, of the year 1723. And as these were the firstlings of all baptized among the high Germans in America, their names shall be here recorded and given to posterity, namely: Martin Urner and his female housemate, Henry Landis and his housemate, Frederick Lang and Jane Mayle. The evening following they held the first love-feast ever celebrated in America at John Gommere's, which created a great stir among the people of that neighborhood, Peter Becker, mentioned before, ministering at the same.

“Through such a Divine happening the Baptists (Brethren) in Pennsylvania became a congregation.”

The importance of this event justifies these quotations and extended consideration. To Julius F. Sachse belongs the credit of working out many an interesting fact of the early history of the Brethren and I desire to quote in this connection his interesting descriptive sketch of the events of this memorable day of Organized Beginnings in America. It is taken from his excellent volume, issued lately, entitled *German Sectarians in Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1899).

“Returning once more to our story, it was on the morning of Wednesday, December 25, 1723 (Christmas Day), that a number of German settlers who had located within the bounds of the German township, wended their way towards the humble weaver’s shop where Conrad Beissel had served his apprenticeship, at the extreme end of the borough limits in what was known as Van Bebbers-town. History has unfortunately failed to preserve for posterity the exact location of Becker’s humble abode. This, however, is but of secondary importance. We know that it was in Van Bebber’s township, on the North Wales road. Tradition strongly points to the vicinity of the present church, where the earliest meetings were held. However, be this as it may, upon the day in question the solemn scenes which took place on the Eder, in Germany, fifteen years before were to be repeated here in the western world and the foundation laid for a new Christian denomination. The seed sown in Germany was to be transplanted into our virgin land, where it was destined to take root and flourish far beyond any expectation of the devout band on either the Eder or the Wissahickon.

“It was a typical winter’s day, the air crisp and cold,

the sky clear, the ground hard and frozen, with a thin covering of snow. Many were the sad memories of the Fatherland that came into the minds of these pilgrims in a far-off land, as they plodded over the frozen ground; separated, as it were, from both kin and church, they thought of the joyous Christmas at home.

“The day was a well-chosen one for their object—the fervent desire to organize a church home for themselves, to found a new Christian sect in the New World. The series of devotional meetings held by Peter Becker and his helpers was about to become the grain of seed which was to bring forth a mighty tree with wide-spreading root and branches. Their aim was to form a Gemeinde or commune of their own—to give them the benefit of religious instruction, and at the same time emancipate them from what Falkner calls ‘the melancholy, saturnine Quaker spirit’ which then prevailed in the province.

“It was well-nigh noon when the party assembled and devotional exercises were commenced. After these were over it was found that there were present seventeen persons who had been baptized in Europe, viz. : Peter Becker, Johann Heinrich Traut, Jeremias Traut, Balser Traut, Heinrich Holzappel, Johannes Gumre, Stephan Koch, Jacob Koch, Johannes Hildebrand, Daniel Ritter, George Balzer Gansz, Johannes Preisz, Johannes Kampfer, Magdalena Traut, Anna Gumre, Maria Hildebrand, and Johanna Gansz. These persons proceeded formally to organize themselves into a congregation, and constituted Peter Becker their elder.

“Six postulants now presented themselves and asked to be baptized as by Scripture ordained, and then received into fellowship, viz. : Martin Urner, his wife, Catherina Urner; Heinrich Landes and his wife; Friedrich Lang



and Jan (Johannes) Mayle. Thus they became the first Anabaptists among the high Germans in America. In the church records this band of converts is always referred to as the 'First Fruits.' The immersion took place the same day. After a noonday meal had been served the party went in solemn procession down the old Indian trail, which led from the North Wales road to a ford on the Wissahickon, and thence beyond the ridge towards the Schuylkill. This trail, which long since has become a public highway, was known north of the township line successively as Morgan's and Trullinger's lane, now Carpenter Street. South of the dividing line the trail was successively known as Gorgas, Milner's, Garseed's and Kitchen's lane. The course of the creek at this point makes a sharp turn and here comes nearest to Germantown. The distance from Bebberstown, or the upper part of Germantown, to the Wissahickon is but a short one. The distance traversed by the party was about one and one-half miles; it was a short journey for the sturdy Germans of that day. The objective point of the party was a level bank, or strip of land on the estate of Johannes Gumre, adjacent to the creek, where easy access could be had to the flowing water. The ravine of the Wissahickon is a rugged one, with towering rocks upon either bank, making the shore inaccessible, except in a few places.



ARMS OF CANTON URI.

“The strip of land in question is about two hundred yards north of Kitchen's lane. There recession of the rocky ravine forms a space large enough to accommodate

quite a respectable number of people. While the rocks are covered with evergreens, the alluvial soil on the bank has fostered the growth of the catalpa and other deciduous trees. In former days, at the time of the scene we are now describing, when the country was as yet covered with a fine forest growth, a rivulet broke over the rocky wall in the background and formed a picturesque waterfall as it leaped from rock to crag in its wild flight down to the bottom of the ravine.

“When the party reached the banks of the Wissahickon the afternoon was already well advanced, so little time was lost. After a fervent invocation to the Throne of Grace and the reading of a passage from Luke xiv, the newly constituted elder entered the water through the thin ice, leading by the hand the first candidate. This was Martin Urner, a native of Alsace, who had been brought up in the Reformed faith, and who, together with his two brothers, for a short time had been members of the Hermits on the Ridge.

“The scene was a solemn one. The small procession on their way to the creek was reinforced by some of the Hermits from the heights on the other side of the stream, and some others who were attracted out of curiosity, so that by the time the party arrived at the banks of the frozen stream the company was quite a goodly one—witnesses who were to assist by their presence at what was to be the founding of a new Christian denomination in America.

“Clear above the sound of the rushing waters and the rustle of leafless branches rose the solemn German invocation and the singing of the baptismal hymn composed by Alexander Mack, ‘Ueberschlag die Kost, Spricht Jesu Christ, wann du den Grund wilt legen.’<sup>1</sup> Numerous as

<sup>1</sup>“Count the cost, says Jesus Christ, when the foundations thou wouldst lay.”

had been the mystic rites and occult incantations held on the rugged ravine and valley of this stream since the gentle Kelpius and his band settled there thirty years before, none were more fervent or brought so great and lasting results as this solemn rite upon the narrow strip of rock-bound land on the shore of the Wissahickon. There stood the administrator deep in the cold water; before him knelt the rugged Alsatian; thrice was he immersed under the ice flood. As he arose the last time the Segenspruch was pronounced and Martin Urner once more entered the material world to become a factor in the religious development of his adopted country. His wife, Catharina Reist, was the next candidate, followed by the other four persons, the same scenes being repeated in each case.

“Long before the solemn rite was ended the winter sun was well down over the Schuylkill hills and the sky covered with leaden clouds. The party now proceeded to the house of Johannes Gumre where dry clothing was provided. In the evening a love-feast was held, the rite of foot-washing was observed, at which the newly constituted elder officiated as a token of his humility. This was followed by the breaking of the bread and the administration of the Holy Communion, and was partaken of by the seventeen constituents and the six newly baptized converts, making twenty-three members in all.

“Thus was perfected the organization of the first ‘Congregation of the Brethren in America.’”







AN OLD GERMANTOWN LANDMARK.

## CHAPTER V.

### GROWTH OF THE CONGREGATION.—CELEBRATING HIS BIRTHDAY.



HAT a scene for a master's hand this reproduction of "The Last Supper," and we may well wish that it might have been placed upon canvas! But what we have is enough, and we are devoutly grateful.

The spiritual blessings which we enjoy as the fruits of their labors would indeed in itself be enough. Let us be thankful for each fact of additional interest. It was Christmas Day. What an appropriate day for the memorial observance of the Ordinances, which He commanded. To that memorable day which should be dear to the heart of every Christian, is now added a three-fold interest for every member of the Brethren church in America, viz., The First Organization, The First Baptism, The First Love-feast and Communion Service. There were twenty-three persons for the twenty-three years of the new century, sur-

rounding the Lord's table. What a gathering from two continents, and various tongues and nations; and the aggregate number of miles this entire company travelled in fleeing persecution and coming to the truth and this blessed fellowship, was more than sixty thousand miles. Not only the number of persons that were there, but their names, are recorded, and what history they have made. Of the original eight at Schwartzenau, not one of them sat at this table. The Lord in His providence has dealt kindly and leads us gently on. Not only have we the day and date, and the facts of the day, and the number of persons, and the names of the persons; but Mr. Julius F. Sachse gives us the reasonable assurance of the identification of the spot where these important events transpired. If so, there is added interest, as the present writer not only walked in their footsteps over the historic route from Germantown and stood on the banks of the baptismal pool in the beautiful Wissahickon, but also stood within the walls where they were seated around the table of the Lord. These ruined walls are all that is left of the once comfortable home of John Gumre. Before me rolls the Wissahickon, famous in story and song, while on the hills above are towering forest trees, standing like sentinels, the guardians of these hallowed scenes. As I stand in the midst of these reflections, and as I look upon the rugged grandeur around me and into the historic past, there is such a flood of inexpressible thought that I stand in silence and look up in mute adoration.

#### IMMEDIATE RESULTS.

It is not difficult to understand that there were immediate results from these wonderful events which we have just cited, as well as remote and far-reaching. The immediate results were of a two-fold character—internal and external.



THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



THE BAPTISTRY ON THE WISSAHICKON.

LEVEL BANK AND POOL, ABOVE KITCHEN'S LANE, WHERE THE FIRST DUNKER BAPTISM WAS ADMINISTERED IN AMERICA.





The effect upon the membership was very marked. It was a visible demonstration of the Lord answering the earnest prayers of the faithful ones. Such great blessings brought new life and hope to the congregation—indeed they had not been a congregation before. The desire that all might enjoy such blessings of fellowship as they enjoyed, was intensified. The truth must now be spread. Missionary enterprise was commenced. It has already been noted above that these memorable Christmas-day scenes “created a great stir among the people of the neighborhood.” Here then were inside and outside results, incentives, opportunities. Steps were at once taken to improve these favorable opportunities, but the “winter proved to be an exceedingly hard and stormy one, and the meetings were discontinued until spring. They were resumed early in May, and continued with great success. Efforts were also made to reach and influence the youth and to educate them in matters spiritually. Many were attracted to the services and ‘taught to walk in the fear of the Lord and to love the Brethren.’ As the fame of this awakening spread abroad there was such an increase of attendance that no room could be found large enough to accommodate the worshippers ; so, whenever the weather permitted, the assembly was held in the open air.”<sup>1</sup>

There was, however, another immediate result. Such present blessings and such bright prospects for the future was not to be shared alone by those here in America. What glad news this will be to send across the ocean and what joy it will bring to the dear brethren and sisters in the far-away German Fatherland. They shall know of it soon that they may share in the joy of this good news and, perhaps, be induced to come to America and share in this promising work.

<sup>1</sup> Account of German Baptist Brethren in *German Sectarians*.



## A MESSAGE TO THE HOME LAND.

The *Chronicon Ephratense* gives the following interesting account of this message: "Under these circumstances they deemed it well to make a detailed report of this new awakening to their Brethren in Germany. Therefore they prepared in common a writing addressed to them, in which they informed them that they had become reunited in Pennsylvania, and that hereupon a great awakening had resulted in the land, which was still daily increasing; that of the awakened several had joined their communion, to which they had to consent, as they dared not withstand the counsels of God." It would be interesting to know that message in full, to have the exact words and know the real heart throbs that pulsated through them, but we shall probably never know more than we know now. The above quotation, no doubt, gives us a fair conception of the scope of the letter, and we furthermore know the effect this and other reports had upon the Brethren in Germany. We shall notice later the history of the original Schwartzenau congregation. Two Continents are now interested in the struggles in this new and, to them, unknown world. Other messages go from time to time to the Home Land. The earnest prayers from both sides of the great ocean strengthen the hearts of the brave leaders, as they go forth, over the hills and down the valleys, through the forests and across the rivers, bearing the message of the "Man of Galilee"—for he said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 28 : 19-20.



SCENE ON MAIN STREET, GERMANTOWN.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE IN THE BRETHREN CHURCH.—A MISSIONARY TOUR TO FRONTIER POINTS.



HE year 1724 was destined to be scarcely less eventful and important than the previous year. No one who is a careful student can dwell upon the events of this year without feeling that they were of the utmost importance to the German pioneer settlers and far-reaching in their influence and permanent results. It was deemed advisable that all the scattered settlements of Brethren should be visited at once and brought under organized spiritual influences. For this purpose a missionary party was organized, with Peter Becker as the leader. It was the first of a series, but this—the most remarkable missionary tour to the frontier in all Pennsylvania colonial history—is absolutely without parallel. Leaving industry and loved ones behind, these pioneer preachers of the gospel, with true German devotion to the cause they loved, marched forth, seven horsemen and seven footmen. It was a worthy representation of the importance of the cause they sought to establish, as well as a worthy representation

of the work accomplished in their continued devotion. What a mission was theirs, pushing out to the frontier lines to battle with callous indifference and skepticism or mysticism and materialism among their fellow-countrymen. And so October 23, 1724, was a memorable day for the Germantown settlement, and what an impressive scene it must have been to behold the gathering of the company of cavalry and infantry, and then behold the company as it slowly moved out of the settlement, northward, over the old Indian trail. The scattered settlers have gathered in little groups here and there to discuss the journey and mission of their neighbors and friends, and with deep interest watched them until they vanished over the slopes of the distant hills.

From the description of "The German Baptist Brethren" I quote the following:<sup>1</sup> "The first stop was made in the beautiful Skippack valley, where a number of Germans had settled. Here several meetings were held with much success; thence they went northward, crossed the Perkiomen and continued on through Providence to Falckner's Swamp, where a halt was made at the house of one Albertus, who, it appears, was in communion with the party. Here revival meetings were held, which closed with a *Liebesmahl* in the evening, followed by the breaking of bread; thence they journeyed to Oley, in Berks county, near Douglassville, where similar work was done with the same results. From Oley the party went southward and crossed the Schuylkill, going direct to the house of Martin Urner, one of the 'First Fruits,' who, since his baptism, had permanently settled in Coventry, Chester county, immediately opposite the present town of Pottstown.

"On the next day, Saturday, November 7, 1724, \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> *German Sectarrians.*

a meeting was held in Urner's house, at which Elder Becker presided. Two candidates were baptized in the Schuylkill, and the ceremony was followed by the usual love-feast and bread-breaking in the evening.

“Upon this occasion was organized the Coventry Brethren Church, of which Martin Urner was made preacher. The following nine persons were the constituent members: Martin Urner, his wife, Catherine Reist Urner; Daniel Eicher and wife, Henrich Landes and wife, Peter Höffly, Owen Longanacre and Andrew Sell.

“From Coventry the revivalists journeyed towards the Conestoga country, as the western part of Chester county was then known. Upon leaving Urner's the party divided, the mounted men keeping to the road and passing the night of Monday, November 9th, at the house of Jacob Weber, who then lived in the Conestoga valley, evidently near the present Weberstown, in Leacock township. Those on foot took a shorter route, probably over the Welsh mountain, and stopped at the house of Johannes Graff. This was in Earl township, at what is now known as Graffsdale, at the lower end of Earl township. The original tract of 1,419 acres was situated on Graff's run, a branch of the Muhlbach (Mill creek). Johannes Graff was the earliest and wealthiest settler in the vicinity. The foundation-stones of the cabin which he built in 1718 are yet to be seen upon the property of a lineal descendant.

“The footmen passed the night under the hospitable roof of Johannes Graff, and on the next day journeyed to the house of Hans Rudolph Nägele, a Mennonite preacher, where both horse and footmen again united.

“The night was passed at the house of Stephen Galliond. Early upon the next day, Wednesday, November 11th, the party retraced their steps and journeyed towards



the valley of the Pequea to bring about an awakening among the Mennonites who had settled there, many of whom had become followers of the seductive Bauman and his noxious 'Newborn' teaching. A large gathering was held at the house of Heinrich Höhn on Thursday, November 12th, at which Beissel was present.

"At this meeting, according to the old records, extraordinary revival powers were manifested. The evangelists spoke with such force concerning apostolic baptism and the Divine purpose concerning fallen man involved therein, that after the close of the meeting five persons felt convinced and applied for baptism. These candidates were Heinrich Höhn and his wife, at whose house the revival was held; Johann Mayer and wife and Joseph Schaffer. The party at once proceeded to the Pequea, and the ordinance was administered to them by Peter Becker. Before the rite was concluded, another person, Veronica Friedrichs, the wife of a local miller, presented herself as a candidate and was accepted. During this service on the banks of the placid Pequea, much fervent spirit manifested itself among all present, and no one was more impressed than Conrad Beissel. He had felt for some time past that longer to withstand the ordinance of God was presumption. To overcome this craving and ease his conscience, Beissel, some time previous to this pilgrimage, attempted to baptize himself. This questionable act, however, failed to convince him, and the uncertainty of its efficacy left him in a very unenviable state of mind. Yet he considered his old master and the others present so far beneath him in every respect that it would be too great a humiliation for his proud spirit to receive baptism at their hands.

"The stepping forth of Veronica Friedrichs, the fervent prayers and pious ejaculations, all tended to increase the



excitement of Beissel; well may it be assumed that it reached a fever heat, and that his mental conflict was a fearful one. He, too, longed to enter the water and be plunged beneath the flood, and through it again enter the material world cleansed from all taint and sin. While he felt himself called to fulfill a mission to preach the Gospel himself, yet his pride forbade him to humble himself, as he considered, to bow to his old master and receive the rite at his hands.

“While Veronica was being baptized the excitement rose still higher. Suddenly, in the very midst of the solemn rite, Beissel remembered how it was recorded in Scripture that even Christ had humbled himself to be baptized by so lowly a person as John. The scene on the banks of the Pequea upon that November day was certainly an impressive one; religious enthusiasm was wrought to a high pitch and reached its culmination when Conrad Beissel announced his intention to be baptized in ‘apostolicwise,’ and importuned Peter Becker to administer the rite. No preparations were made, but as Veronica Friedrichs was led up the slippery bank, Beissel humbly entered the freezing water and knelt before the elder, who after a short invocation immersed the candidate thrice, face forward, under the cold flood.”

After the conclusion of this baptismal service, all retired to the house of Heinrich Höhn, where was held a Love-feast and Communion service in the evening. There were several more meetings held in the neighborhood and Sigmund Landert and his wife were baptized. On the 14th of November, the Germantown missionaries started on their homeward journey. To bring out important lessons may be regarded as sufficient reason for devoting much space to a description of these events. We are much indebted

to the *Chronicon* for dates and facts of these early years that brought such important results.

#### LESSONS AND RESULTS.

It is desirable to comment briefly on a few lessons and important results while these scenes are fresh in mind. For, it may readily be seen, there are considerations far beyond their local setting. Here are characteristics that have made history. Elements of strength and principles of action, adopted in Germany, are here reëstablished, and have directed the progress of the church ever since. Alexander Mack was an evangelist of note before he organized the Brethren church, and there are many evidences of the missionary activities of the church while yet in Germany. This tour, after the organization in America, was the first step in that missionary enterprise which has been such an important factor in the life of the Brethren church. As an immediate result, one church was organized and the foundation laid for another one, both of these becoming prosperous and important in a few years. In this house-to-house visitation there was social converse and personal instruction regarding spiritual things; and we shall never know out of how many homes was driven the spirit of indifference and materialism by the erection of the altar of prayer. Let us emphasize that thought in this connection. If there is any one thing in which the Brethren church has distinctly stood above other things it is the exaltation of the home and family life.

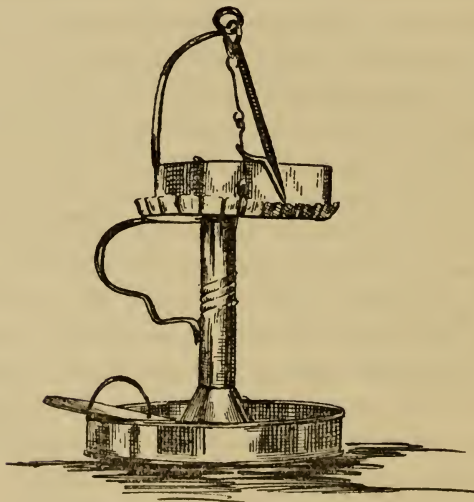
But this evangelistic tour did not simply demonstrate the missionary enterprise in which the Brethren church was born; nor was the organizing of one or two congregations the only result. The seed of the gospel was sown in many homes along the way. The awakened interest in religious

matters was wide-spread, and many a German home received a blessing. The Germantown congregation received much encouragement and inspiration from the success of this work. But there is one more thing to be added to these results, though it mars the brightness of our picture. As already noted above, Conrad Beissel was one of the baptized converts in the Conestoga. He soon fomented a schism that in a few years brought sadness to many hearts and homes and lives.

#### THE HOME A SANCTUARY.

It has already been noted that the preaching services were held in private homes, the homes of the members. There is no higher type of the Christian home than was found among these early German settlers. Here, indeed, there was earnest Christian devotion; here was the family altar; here was the Bible and the hymn-book, the constant source of instruction and blessing; and here, also, there was careful religious training of the children. But the typical home of which I am speaking is not yet complete. This home was a sanctuary. Here gathered parents and children, old and young, for the public preaching service. No other power on earth can equal in far-reaching influence this combination of the home and the church. We need not wonder, therefore, that it is stated in the old records concerning the first awakening or revival, that "it was especially among the young." This was no doubt a rather "primitive" way, but it suited the times and the circumstances, was eminently successful, and crowned thousands of homes with the richest blessings the gospel can give. I am not speaking of an isolated circumstance, but of a universal condition and the halo of glory of these home-sanctuary scenes has brightened and blessed the lives of

thousands and thousands of Pennsylvania-Germans. There were homes in which such a sanctuary existed for two and three generations, and grace and blessing is the heritage of the family unto this day. For forty-seven years there was not a church or meeting-house among the Brethren. The first one was built at Germantown in 1770, and there were but few for the next ten or twenty years. There are in existence to-day many old Pennsylvania homesteads, homes of the "old families," that were built with special reference to the sanctuary altar, and the accommodation of the "meetings." We shall know fully about the "first meeting-house" a little later.







THE OLD SHUMACHER HOUSE, GERMANTOWN.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SECOND EMIGRATION.



N a few years a great change was effected in America. By the close of 1724 there were three congregations organized: Germantown, Coventry and Conestoga. The latter was organized soon after the visit from Germantown, and Conrad Beissel was selected as the preacher. Many converts having been made, and the general conditions of things being encouraging to the new settlers, many favorable reports were sent to the members still in Germany or different parts of Europe. It will be remembered that the first emigration came from the Crefeld congregation. It is necessary now to trace the history of the original Schwartzenu congregation during the sojourn in Europe. For twelve years this congregation enjoyed a fair degree of liberty and unbroken prosperity, at Schwartzenu, in the province of Witgenstein. But in the year 1720 a great change came. Upon the death of the mild and friendly count who ruled this province the entire body of Brethren was driven out of the hitherto friendly terri-



tory. Thus while the members left Crefeld for America, in 1719, the members of the mother congregation were refugees from their home in Schwartzenu, the following year. They found a temporary rest and home at Serustervin or Westervain, in West Friesland. It was at this place that they received the news of the promising mission fields among the Germans in Pennsylvania. They decided to cast their lot with their friends and brethren in the New World, the land of religious liberty. They sailed from Rotterdam, in July, on the good ship *Allen*, James Craigie, master, and qualified at Philadelphia, September 15, 1729.<sup>1</sup> And now we enter upon a new era in the history of the Brethren in Pennsylvania.

#### DARK DAYS AND TRIALS OF FIRE.

We are in the midst of years that are full of history. There are dark days that are full of new and strange and sad experiences. We cannot study all of these things in detail, but we must be satisfied with a rapid sketch, a kind of panoramic view of the principal facts and results. As has already been stated, in treating of the religious condition at the time of settlement in this country, some members had not entirely escaped the influence of mysticism at Crefeld and other places, and they brought some of it to this country. For a time it prevented their fellowship, but was finally swallowed up for a time at least, in the general interest of the revival services. But the spirit of mysticism was only waiting for a favorable opportunity for its development, through the leadership of some one. This opportunity was seized by Conrad Beissel, the new convert

<sup>1</sup> *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, Vol. XVII., p. 18. See also MORGAN EDWARD'S *History of the Baptists in Pennsylvania*, Part IV., p. 66, concerning persecution in Germany.

and preacher of the Conestoga congregation. He was a strange character, living a life of dreamy solitude in the Conestoga country. He was a poor, uneducated man, with a strange history in Europe. His most marked characteristic seems to have been his wonderful capacity to absorb all new and strange beliefs wherever found—whether the extreme and sweeping grounds of Pietism, or the ethereal conceptions of the Rosicrusian Mystics, or the solitary meditations of the Hermits on the Wissahickon, or the new doctrine of the Kiethian Quakers on French creek. He seemed to have had the unique experience, too, of coming in contact with more strange doctrines than any one else, and so his own beliefs passed through many evolutions from time to time.

#### CONRAD BEISSEL.

It is not my purpose to write a life of this man and to give a full account of his work, but it is manifestly necessary to give some facts and details that are needful for a proper understanding of the historical connection with the Brethren church. Conrad Beissel was born in April, 1690, at Eberbach, in the Palatinate. His father was a dissolute journeyman baker, who died two months before the child was born. The orphan boy received the name of Johann Conrad Beissel. He had a devout mother, but she died when he was only seven years of age, and it seemed as if his last blessing had gone. He grew up in a state of the most abject poverty until old enough to learn a trade, when he was apprenticed by the local authorities to a master baker. To his previous life of poverty and wretchedness was now added that of unrestrained frivolity, assisting his master in fiddling at dances. After serving his apprenticeship he started out as a journeyman baker traveling from

place to place. He was for a time at Strasburg where he was first introduced into Inspirationist and Pietistic circles. It was here that he came into fellowship and association



ALLEGED PORTRAIT OF CONRAD  
BEISSEL.

with Michael Eckerlin whose four sons played such an important part in the Ephrata community years after. From Strasburg he journeyed to Mannheim where he remained for a time, but was compelled to leave on account of trouble with his master's wife whom he called Jezebel. His next stop was Heidelberg where he had varied experiences. "Here he experienced an enlightenment of the Spirit." He attended revival meetings and devoted himself to his business in which he was successful. He now again turned to mystic circles and joined the local Ros-

icrucian chapter. When this became known, he was expelled from the town and this unfortunate experience seems to have made an end of his business as a baker. He wandered about, almost starving, finding some employment at wool-spinning and other means of livelihood. "He sojourned for a short time among the Tunkers at Schwartzenu." After much wretchedness and tribulation and persecution, he resolved to leave the Fatherland for the wilds of the New World and join Kelpius on the Wissabickon. In spite of the protests of his friends, he prepared to carry his project into effect; crossing the ocean, he arrived at

Germantown sometime in the fall of 1720. Among his companions across the ocean were George Steifel, Jacob Stuntz, and Simon Koenig. On reaching Germantown, great was his surprise and sore his disappointment to learn that Kelpius was dead some years, the chapter of Perfection broken up and its members scattered far and wide. There was a remnant of the community left who lived the solitary lives of hermits and among these was Conrad Matthai whom Beissel consulted as to what he should do. Matthai gave him good advice by telling him to remain at Germantown and learn the weaver's trade or art and Beissel determined to follow such advice for the time being. He indentured himself to Peter Becker who was a master-weaver of Germantown, for the term of one year, but left before the time had elapsed. It will be remembered from the preceding pages that when the first Brethren congregation in America was organized, December 25, 1723, Peter Becker became the Elder, as he had heretofore been the leader. As an apprentice he became a member of the family of Peter Becker and it will thus be seen that for the space of almost one year he was the companion and associate of the leading man of the Brethren and from this time on dates his historical connection with the church. He gradually yielded to the acceptance of the doctrine of the church, until impressions received from other sources directed him into other channels of faith. These two men were greatly grieved as they beheld the spiritual indifference of their countrymen. Various historians of the times describe the condition of the Germans as most lamentable, amounting even to unbelief, assigning various reasons for such condition. The *Chronicon* states that the cause for such indifference to spiritual things is: "The great freedom of this land was one cause of their being thus sold



under the spirit of this world, through which all godly influence has been lost, and each one depended upon himself." The foregoing biographical facts of Beissel were mainly taken from *German Sectarians*, by Julius F. Sachse, that excellent work on the Ephrata monastic community. I quote from the same, page 53, in order to locate Beissel and the place of his future operations upon leaving Germantown: "Determined to carry out his original purpose, Beissel, at the expiration or breaking of his indenture, in the fall of 1721, in company with his former companion, Stuntz, journeyed to the Conestoga valley; and there, in a secluded spot, in the primitive forest beside a spring of water, the two wanderers built themselves a log cabin. This was on the banks of the Mühlbach (Mill creek), a branch of the Conestoga. The branch rises in the Welsh mountain in the eastern part of Lancaster county, and, after an intricate course, empties into that river at the dividing line of Pequea and West Lampeter townships.

"The exact situation of this historic spot can, after the lapse of a century and three-quarters, be given to a certainty, thanks to some old surveys, maps and records, which have been found and located after a long and patient search extending over years of time. The site of Beissel's original cabin in Lancaster is upon the grounds of Miss Marianna Gibbons, about half a mile north of the Bird-in-Hand Station on the Pennsylvania railroad, and agrees with the old record, which states that it was eight miles from the junction of the Mühlbach with the Conestoga."

It was in this hut on the Mühlbach, where Beissel laid the foundation for his Monastic Commune; but many changes were yet to be brought about and many impressions to be made on his mind to become foundation stones



in his future system. From here he soon visited the Labadists on the Bohemia Manor and their communal life made deep and lasting impressions upon his mind. He found much to interest him and much that he afterwards used in his own community. About the same time he visited also the Sabbatarians at Providence and Newtown in Chester county. It was not long until the Sabbath was duly observed in the log cabin by Beissel and his companions, which now were Isaac Van Bebber and George Steifel in addition to Stuntz.

For a time all was quiet and peaceful in the hut on the Mühlbach, but dissension soon arose and dark clouds of trouble threatened the heretofore contented group. When the dissensions arose, Steifel was the first to leave. For some time he lived a solitary recluse life, when he became acquainted with the Moravians and moved to Bethlehem, where he died a few years later.<sup>1</sup>

The severe life was too much for Van Bebber and he soon left with impaired health. Beissel seems to have regretted his leaving and the following account of the parting is recorded in the *Chronicon*: "He took leave of the Superintendent (Beissel) with much love, and protested that it was not possible for him to live in that way. The former gave him the following counsel to take with him: 'Know that when you are successful in the world, God has forsaken you; but when all misfortune comes upon you here, then know that God still loves you.' After many years he froze both hands and feet in a shipwreck and was put under the care of Christopher Witt in Germantown. There he remembered this farewell, and sent his last greeting to his old friend."

Misfortunes seem to come now to Beissel in rapid suc-

---

<sup>1</sup> See Moravians' Records.

cession. Soon after losing these two companions he was away from the cabin for a time. During this temporary absence, Stuntz sold the hut and kept the money as part payment for loans he had made to Beissel. Although he was now homeless and without companions and probably without any means whatever, he was not despairing. He shouldered his axe, penetrated deeper into the forest and before the close of the summer of 1723, he had erected for himself a log cabin about one mile from the former place. This cabin was located beside a beautiful spring and it was here that he was joined by Michael Wohlfarth and the two became life-long friends. It was the following year, 1724, when the thrilling scene was enacted, already recited in preceding pages, and Conrad Beissel received baptism at the hands of Elder Peter Becker. And now for a few years he is in fellowship with the Brethren church, and, having learned something of the past history of the man, we shall better understand his career during these eventful years.

After the departure of the missionaries from Germantown, who had created such a stir, Beissel was selected as the leader and the new congregation of twelve members was formally organized. Scarcely was this accomplished when he began to present his doctrines regarding the Sabbath and defended certain Jewish laws in abstaining from meats, such as pork, etc. Agitation and discussion upon these topics soon produced lack of harmony and restlessness which laid the foundations for dissension and confusion. The confusion seemed about complete, when, soon after, he presented his mystic speculations which produced so marked an effect that, while some thought him inspired, the others thought him crazy. There were a number of converts, however, and among those baptized by Beissel,

was his friend and companion, Wohlfarth. Communication between the Sabbatarians on French creek and Beissel and his adherents, became more and more frequent, and he presented his Sabbatarian views more positively and most bitterly antagonized those who differed on doctrine. This bitterness against the Brethren was carried by those who went to proselyte to all the settlements and finally reached Germantown; and when Elder Peter Becker and some others came on a visit to the Conestoga, Beissel attacked him most bitterly in public in his sermon. Thus was the breach constantly widened, and the Conestoga congregation itself was divided into two parts: those who adhered with Beissel to the Sabbath and those who adhered to the Lord's Day or Sunday. The leader of the latter was Johannes Hildebrand, who had moved to the Conestoga from the mother congregation at Germantown. It was very evident that matters could not go on at this rate and it seemed almost out of the question to restore harmony and reach a peaceful settlement. Beissel made a special effort to reach and influence the various Brethren settlements and that he succeeded will be noted further on in the history. These circumstances bring us to the latter part of the year 1728, and I desire to quote in this connection a paragraph from *German Sectarians*, page 138. "The Germantown Baptists now reproached Beissel for his ingratitude toward them, as it was at their hands that he had received baptism. This, instead of rallying him, only tended to increase his vehemence against his former friends. At the same time he was forced to acknowledge the truth of their argument. How to overcome this dilemma was a serious question. At last, however, a way was found out of the difficulty, which was worked to their own satisfaction. This was the novel proposition to renounce the Becker baptism and return it to the old congregation, and

then to have such of the Beisselianer as had been immersed by Becker rebaptized. This strange scene was enacted toward the close of December, evidently in the Mühlbach or the Conestoga. Upon the appointed day a general meeting of the Sabbatarians was held, during which three brothers and four sisters were selected for the chief ceremony. It had been decided that it was proper for the Sabbatical number to be the foundation of the rebaptized congregation. The number seven and the two sexes were therefore chosen. According to the teachings of the Rosicrucians the number seven represents the union of the square and the triad, and is considered the divine number, in the same sense in which forty is the perfect numeral. Jan Meyle and Beissel were the first to enter the icy water; special hymns were sung, and after an invocation, in which both men renounced their former baptism, Meyle immersed Beissel thrice backwards, and immediately afterwards repeated the operation thrice forwards, thus baptizing the candidate. Beissel then repeated the same ceremony upon Meyle and the others in turn. This act completed the separation between the Germantown and Conestoga Baptists." This babyish act of Beissel in his desire to "return" his former baptism, has received no end of ridicule, but if we can overlook his self-righteousness and self-exaltation and his ambition to lead, the poor man is to be pitied rather than laughed at. This was the condition of things when Alexander Mack with the larger part of the Schwartzenau congregation arrived in the following year, 1729. Several attempts were made at reconciliation, but without success. The Rosicrucian was now more than a mystic; he was partly a Jew and a strict Sabbatarian, on which latter doctrine the separation partly came about. But not this alone, nor was this all of his system. He was a Labadist, and had already advocated celibacy and a communal life. One

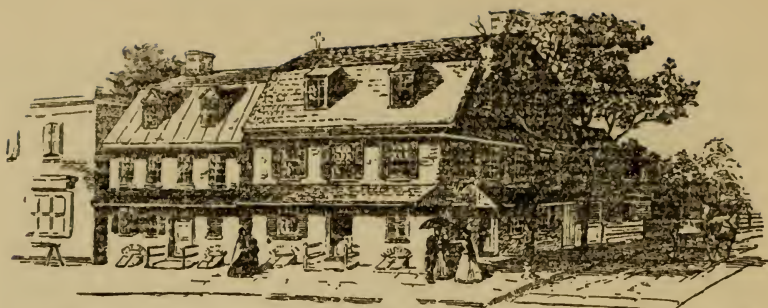


of his special missions now was to invade the sanctity of the home, separate husband from wife and wife from husband and parents from children. To many a home, for peace and happiness, he gave sorrow and separation and many of the victims were filled with remorse and regret. Thus was the separation complete. By the very nature of the case, the system of doctrine and the character of the leader and defender of that doctrine, complete separation was an absolute necessity. Some historians and others have regarded and classed these people as a branch of the Brethren church. This seems strange to anyone who has studied the system of doctrine of these people. That the German Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists under Beissel were a schism or split in the first place from the Brethren church is unquestioned; but his Monastic Community is no more a branch of the Brethren church from which he separated than the Lutheran church is a branch of the Catholic church. There could be nothing more foreign in doctrine or more opposite in practical working. While the Master said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,"<sup>1</sup> Beissel sought to confine his gospel behind cloister walls. The system was inherently selfish and was destined to die with the brain that conceived it. It was a system whose very foundations were so fallacious in character as to bring about its own destruction and annihilation. But owing to the peculiar conditions and circumstances of those early times, the system flourished for a number of years, and its adherents fairly worshipped its author. Long since, however, has the stern hand of destiny laid low the actors, and while time has silenced the turmoil and the turbulence, and has gently stilled the sobs of broken homes and soothed the heart-aches, let us cover over these scenes of the past with the mantle of charity.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mark 16: 15.





HOUSE FORMERLY AT N. E. COR. OF MAIN ST. AND MARKET SQUARE.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### ALEXANDER MACK, THE PATRIARCH.



WE have already traced, in the preceding chapters, the Origin and Organization of the Brethren church in Germany. Then tracing the First Emigration, followed the church in America in its organization, in its growth and development, and in its vicissitudes for a period of ten years. In the last chapter, reference was made to the original congregation of Schwartzenu in its wanderings in Europe and the emigration to America in 1729. Upon his arrival, Alexander Mack again became the leading spirit of the church, as he had been in the beginning, in the capacity of the "leader and first minister" at the time of organization in 1708. Some so-called historians speak of him as the "founder" of the Brethren church, but in no sense is he either the founder or the foundation. He was only one of eight to organize the work, but because of his previous experience and activity as a minister and evangelist, he naturally became the leading spirit.

As to foundation, we accept the words of the Apostle

THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



RELICS OF THE BRETHREN CHURCH AT GERMANTOWN.

ANCIENT CANDLE-STICKS  
PARCHMENT DEEDS  
COLLECTION BASKETS  
POOR BOX

COOKING UTENSILS  
COFFEE URN  
POTS AND BUCKETS  
SKIMMER



Paul, I Corinthians, 3: 11: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." It may be well to recall Alexander Mack's recital of the covenant of the eight: "Under these circumstances some felt themselves drawn powerfully to seek the footsteps of the primitive Christians, and desired earnestly to receive in faith the ordained testimonies of Jesus Christ according to their true value. At the same time they were internally and strongly impressed with the necessity of the obedience of faith to a soul that desires to be saved. \* \* \*

"Finally, in the year 1708, eight persons consented together, to enter into a covenant of a good conscience with God, to take up all the commandments of Jesus Christ as an easy yoke, and thus to follow the Lord Jesus, their good and faithful shepherd, in joy and sorrow, as his true sheep, even unto a blessed end."

This is a clear statement of those who, having come from different beliefs, accepted Christ and His gospel as fundamental principles. There is no other creed or confession to-day, but the Brethren still accept the New Testament as their rule of faith and practice.

*Birth.*—Because of the importance of his ministry and leadership for twenty-seven years, it will be of interest to relate briefly such biographical facts as have come down to us. It may be said, however, that we know but little about Alexander Mack. He was born in 1679 at Schriesheim, about midway between Mannheim and Heidelberg, in the Electorate of Palatia or the Palatinate, now forming a part of the grand duchy of Baden, in southern Germany. Of his parents we have little positive information. From what his biographers say of him, we know that his parents were respectable, wealthy and religious.

Inasmuch as "After the Reformation Heidelberg was

long the headquarters of German Calvinism and gave its name to a famous Calvinistic catechism," it is altogether likely that Alexander Mack received careful instruction in the Heidelberg catechism, since he was born and raised only a few miles from that city. Elder James Quinter writes<sup>1</sup> in 1867: "Although we know but little of his ancestors, it appears he descended from a very respectable and wealthy family. He was a Presbyterian (Reformed), and educated in the Calvinistic faith. Of his literary acquirements we know nothing but what we can gather from his writings, and from these it does not appear that he had a classical education."

*Occupation.*—It seems that in early life he was a miller and operated his milling interests. Morgan Edwards, writing<sup>2</sup> in 1770, says: "He had a handsome patrimony at Schriesheim, with a profitable mill and vineyard thereon, but spent all in raising and maintaining his church at Schwarzenau."

*Marriage.*—In the year 1700, at the age of twenty-one, he was married to Anna Margaretha Klingin, a native of the same place and about his own age. To this union were born five children, three sons and two daughters.

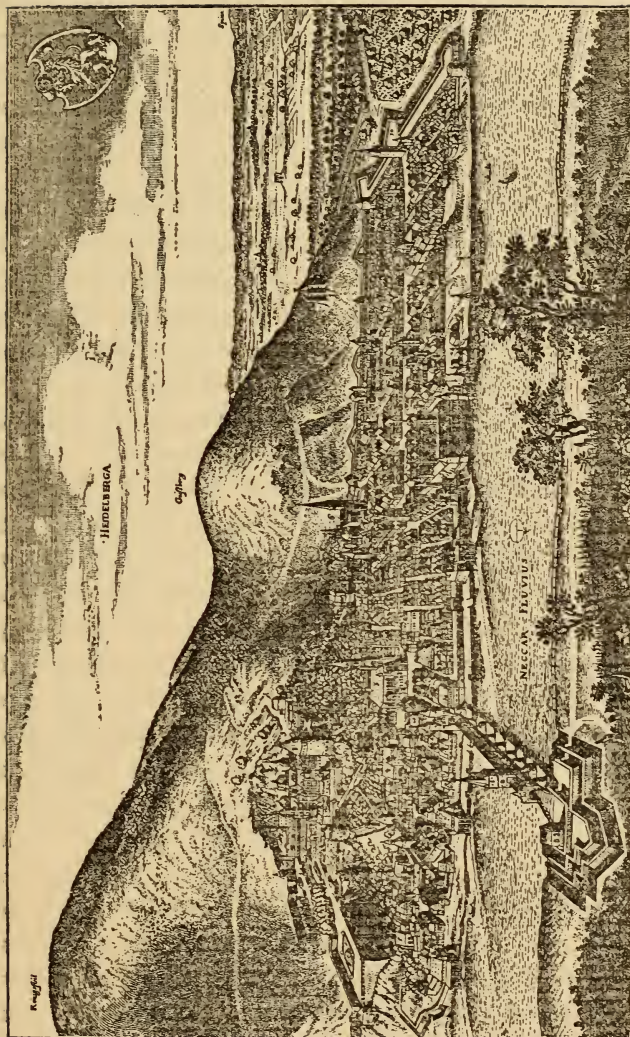
*Life-work.*—His life-work began at an early age. He was only twenty-nine years of age when the church was organized and he was chosen the first minister, but he had been active already for a number of years before this time. Being dissatisfied with the religious system in which he had been brought up, he directed his prayerful attention to the scriptures in searching for "the old paths," for he was anxious to ascertain the mind of the Lord as therein revealed. This soon brought persecution and in a few

---

<sup>1</sup> Memoir of Alexander Mack, Sen., *Brethren's Encyclopedia*.

<sup>2</sup> Materials toward *A History of the American Baptists*, Vol. I., Part IV.





HEIDELBERG BEFORE ITS DEVASTATION BY THE FRENCH (MERIAN, 1645).

years he was an exile from his splendid estate at Schriesheim. He took his wife and little ones, and with many others found refuge at Schwarzenau under the mild rule of Count Henry. Here he found many active Pietists and among them Ernest Christoph Hochmann von Hochenau who was an active evangelist and with whom Mack traveled much, for they held much in common. There is no doubt but that Hochmann's Confession of Faith encouraged and confirmed Mack considerably in his own growing convictions; but Hochmann seemed to lack the courage of his convictions and his work ultimately came to naught and he died in sorrowful poverty. The work organized here in 1708, as has already been noticed, continued for twelve years, or until 1720; when upon the death of the mild and friendly Count, they were driven to Holland. But the year 1720 is emphasized for sadness in addition to persecution and exile. From *Quinter's Memoir*, I quote as follows: "But he had domestic afflictions to endure, as well as those arising from persecution. In 1720, twenty years after they were united in the bonds of matrimony, and twelve years after they were united to Christ by a living faith and gospel obedience, his companion was taken from him by death. She is said to have been a meek Christian and virtuous wife. She found in death, what she and her husband had sought in vain for on earth, a calm retreat from the storm of persecution. Within one week of the death of his wife, his oldest daughter, then about six years old, also died. It is said that the child was uncommonly fond of its mother. And out of regard perhaps to the fondness which existed between the mother and child, as well as out of regard to the circumstances of persecution under which the father and child were placed, the Lord in His wisdom and goodness may have taken the little daughter

to the quiet home of the mother where it could enjoy her fond caresses, rather than leave it where it must endure the hardships and troubles of persecution in common with its father. Thus in about one week, in addition to the troubles consequent upon the great persecution which was then raging, he had to bear the loss of a kind and Christian wife and a dear little daughter.

“After seeking unsuccessfully for a retreat from persecution in his native country, he with his three sons, and a number of his brethren, emigrated to America in 1729, and settled as a poor man, poor in this world’s goods but rich in faith, on a small lot of ground near Germantown, in the vicinity of Philadelphia.”

His company consisted of about thirty families and so large an addition to their numbers greatly stimulated the Brethren in Pennsylvania. But the heart of this devoted man was saddened when he found the sad condition of things among his brethren, the result of the Beissel secession. His life was full of heroism, however, and his true courage and moral bravery failed him not now. He went resolutely to work, once more, to win the last great battle of his life. Perhaps he little realized that it was to be the last great struggle. After several vain attempts to reconcile Beissel, all efforts were concentrated to bring harmony out of the confusion and chaos, and once more organize his forces for united Christian work. The result of the efforts is perhaps best indicated by pointing to the fact that a number of churches were organized in the course of a few years. The following is at least a partial list of the churches and the dates of their organization: The Oley Church, in 1732; the Great Swamp Church, in 1733; Amwell Church, New Jersey, in 1733; the Cocalico Church, in 1735; the White Oakland, in 1736; the Cono-



wango, in 1738; and others soon afterwards. But he saw only a part of the fruits of his latter labors. His life was too intense, too full of sacrifice and service, to last long; and at the early age of fifty-six, on February 19, 1735, he peacefully passed away. He had sacrificed all, he lived a hero, he died a martyr. He lived not long, but so well. Morgan Edwards exclaimed of him: "He was a man of real Piety."

Though he probably was not classically educated, his writings have lived for two hundred years. He was perhaps not an eloquent preacher, but his consistent life and consecrated devotion wonderfully impressed the truth he professed. He was truly loved and deeply mourned by those who followed his leadership. His death at this time was a very serious loss, coming as it did so soon after the confusion of Beissel secession; and it would certainly have proven fatal if his followers had builded on the personality of their leader. But he was so anxious about the truth that he had carefully eliminated his own personality. Perhaps the truth of this statement is best illustrated by the following incident. Some time before his death, he said to his family, "Now when I am gone, don't mark my grave, or they might sometime want to erect a monument over my grave." The family was grieved to think that his grave should be lost sight of, and so they protested against an unmarked grave. It is said he then yielded to the wishes of his loved ones and gave them privilege to place his initials on a small stone slab. This incident seems well established as a fact; it is at any rate entirely consistent with the man's life and character, and the unpretentious blue-stone, scarce two feet in height, has been a silent witness for more than a century and a half, to multitudes of his followers.

“His Christian character appears to have been that of a primitive follower of Christ. Humility, zeal, self-denial, and charity were conspicuous among the graces that adorned his character. The high estimation in which he was held by his brethren is seen in the circumstance that he was chosen by them to be their minister. He was the first minister in the little Christian community organized at Schwartzenau in 1708, and labored zealously and successfully to enlarge the borders of their Zion. Of his private character as a Christian father we may infer favorably from the circumstances that all his sons became pious and were united to the church before they had completed their seventeenth year. And what seems somewhat remarkable, they all made a public confession of religion in the seventeenth year of their age.”<sup>1</sup>

The graveyard connected with the Brethren church was not opened until near the close of the century, so when Alexander Mack died in 1735, there was but one in the neighborhood, called the Upper Burying Ground of Germantown, and here with loving hands his body was laid away, to rest for one hundred and fifty-nine years. This place has long since been but little used and many removals have taken place within recent years. Because of the growing neglect of the place, it was very desirable that his remains should be removed to the well-kept cemetery of his own brethren and laid in the midst of his descendants, now consisting of six generations buried here. A proposition of removal was pre-

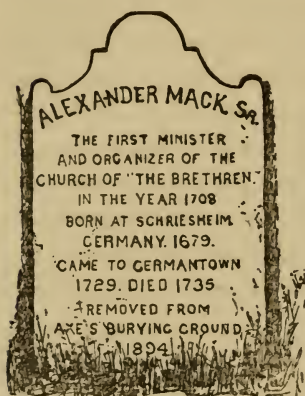


---

<sup>1</sup> *Quinter's Memoir.*



sented to some of the descendants and they quickly consented, scarcely one of them knowing of his place of burial. The removal took place on November 13, 1894, at which time brief funeral services were held in the historic meeting-house, conducted by the author of this



sketch, assisted by Rev. T. T. Myers, of Philadelphia. On this occasion descendants of the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth generations were present to the number of twenty-five. During these long years, there stood over his grave a small slab of Pennsylvania blue-stone marble, with the following inscription: Hier Ruhen | die gebeine | A. M. | geboren 1679. | gestorben 1735. | Alt

56 Jahr. This slab was retained as a foot-stone, and for a head-stone there was erected a plain white marble slab about five feet in height, with the following inscription: Alexander Mack, Sr. | the first minister | and organizer of the | Church of "The Brethren" | in the year 1708. | Born at Schriesheim, | Germany, 1679. | Came to Germantown | 1729, died 1735. | Removed from | Axe's Burying Ground, | 1894.<sup>1</sup> Thus his remains now rest in the midst of his own people, and beside those of his son and successor, Alexander Mack, Jr. He has to-day a numerous descent, some account of which is given in the appendix to this sketch.

It would be interesting to have a list of the baptisms performed by Alexander Mack, but aside from the seven of

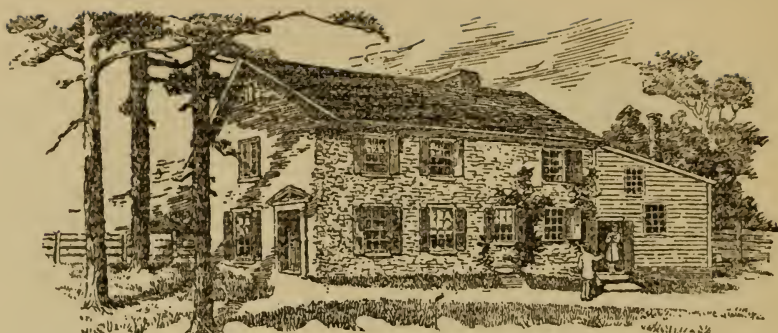
<sup>1</sup> See illustrations.

the original members that he baptized, there are no records of his work in this line.

### HIS SEAL.

Some years ago a few descendants made some investigation for the purpose of recovering the seal of Alexander Mack, but without success and it is now feared that it will never be found. Such a seal indicates the prominence of his family. What the character of this seal was, in its symbolic representation, was probably unknown for nearly a century. While the seal is probably lost, we know its character from an impression that was recently discovered. The Brethren church of Germantown has an interesting collection of old parchment deeds. While we were examining these documents from their historic interest, Mr. Julius F. Sachse discovered the impress of Mack's seal accompanying an official signature. The impression is in red sealing-wax and is in perfect condition. The illustration herewith shows that the seal consisted of several symbols, each of which had a religious significance. The entire combination constitutes a remarkable index to the character of its owner. In the center is the cross, which means sacrifice; the heart means devotion, and placed on the cross, further means sacrificed in devotion; the branches of the vine, mean fruit-bearing. Thus the seal reads: a devoted, fruit-bearing, sacrificed life. How significantly true this is of the life of Alexander Mack!





THE OLD PINE COTTAGE, GERMANTOWN.

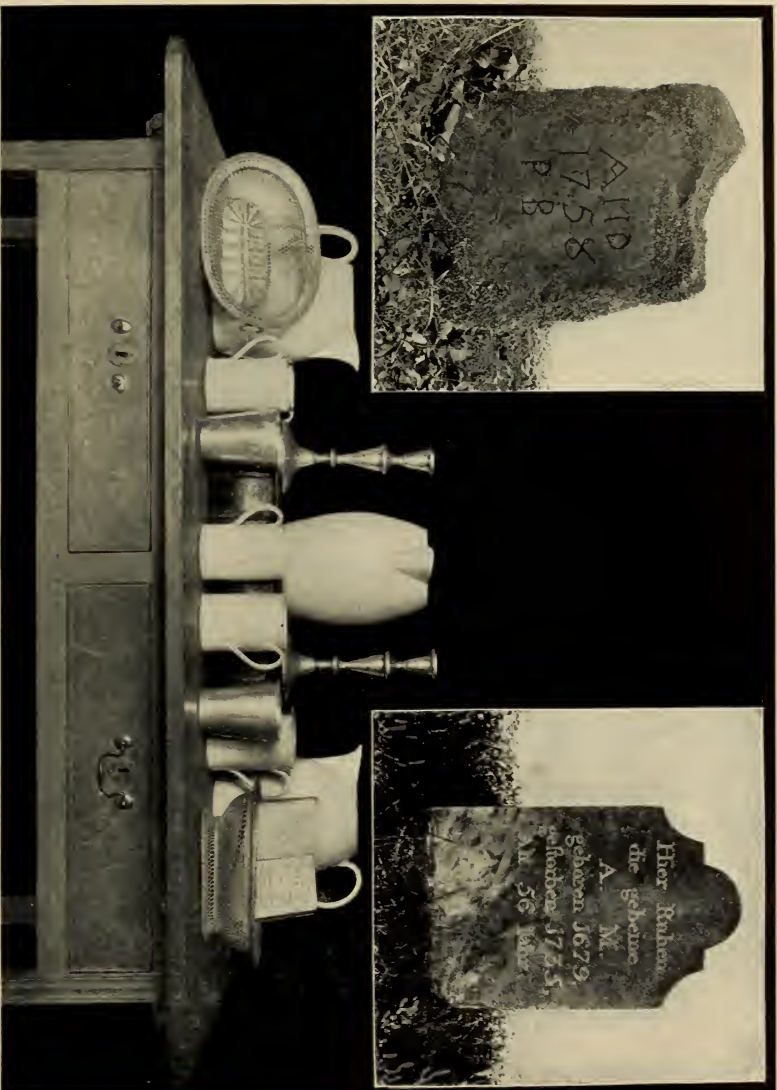
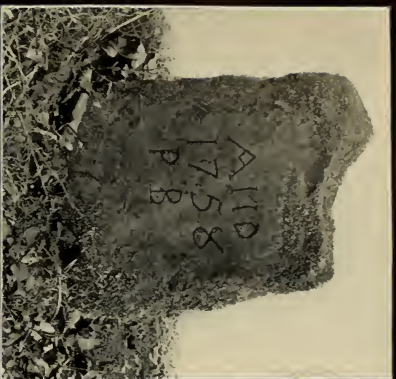
## CHAPTER IX.

### THE REACTION.



THE history of the Brethren church for the first twenty-seven years, viz., 1708–1735, has been given with a good deal of detail, since this period is the most important historically in the present treatment. The scope of this sketch will not admit of the same fullness in treatment from this time on, but it is necessary to notice some important events and changes. The death of Alexander Mack in 1735 proved to be a very serious loss. That the work received somewhat of a stunning blow for the time being, and that some of the workers were thrown into confusion, is very evident and is not to be wondered at, when the circumstances are carefully considered. There are a number of distinct elements that enter into this consideration, each one of which is, indeed, important. We may name as fruitful subjects for consideration, such elements as the work, the workers, the discouragements, the conditions of the times, and others might be added to the list.

# THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



J. F. SACHS, PHOTO.

## RELICS OF THE BRETHREN CHURCH AT GERMANTOWN.

ORIGINAL PREACHER'S TABLE AND CANDLE STICKS.

PULPIT BIBLE AND DISHES USED AT LOVE-FEAST AND COMMUNION CUPS.

TOMBSTONE OF ELDER PETER BECKER.

TOMBSTONE OF ELDER ALEXANDER MACK, SR.







1. The work was in many respects a new one under these circumstances and presented many difficulties and unsolved problems. Much energy was needed to push the work, and such an important event as the loss of a leader would easily affect its progress.

2. The workers were from different communities, the subjects of different educational influences, and trained under the influence of very varied religious impressions. They felt the need of the harmonizing influence of a common training. They needed a leader who was able to command their love and respect, which would constitute a bond of common union in times of little differences. In Mack they had such a leader, and they keenly felt the loss when he died.

3. Many were the discouragements. The views and doctrines of the early Germans were very varied and divergent. All shades of belief were accepted and prevailed. Agitation was rife. Beissel led a powerful influence in opposition, strengthened by the recruits from all sources.

4. There seemed to have been at this time a period of religious excitement, the natural extreme of the previous indifference that existed a decade or two before. It was also the result of the great agitation in religious doctrine, and the marked antagonism and opposition of some of the workers.

Then, too, it must be remembered that it was not an easy matter to change back again to the leadership of Becker. This is no discredit to Elder Peter Becker, who had been such an efficient support of the work from 1723 until 1729, at which time Mack took full charge of the work. While Becker was not a noted preacher, he was a sweet singer and gifted with more than ordinary power in prayer; he

was a conscientious and devoted worker ; he was quiet and conservative in time of crisis ; and he must ever be regarded as a judicious and faithful leader for six years previous to Mack's coming to America, as well as twelve years after his death. It will be remembered that in describing the organization of the church in America, the life of Peter Becker is intimately interwoven with all the history of that event, and space therefore forbids a separate treatment of his life. Further reference will also be made to him and the importance of his work.

In some respects, the time of Mack's death seemed most unfortunate. A great crisis was approaching among the Germans in Pennsylvania. Beissel was especially active and aggressive, and while he had confined himself to the Brethren settlements in various places, he now branched out and began to proselyte among the Lutherans and Reformed in the Tulpehocken and other places. It was in 1735 that Rev. Peter Miller and Conrad Weiser and other prominent Germans accepted Beissel's doctrine, and removed to Ephrata. Beissel now seemed to put forth every effort possible to destroy the Brethren congregations. He organized large parties, sometimes as many as twelve in a party, to visit the settlements of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He laid claim to following the Brethren's doctrine in the observance of all the commandments of the New Testament and everywhere threatened the church. He found in after years that his work was too aggressive, for he had many converts he could not hold, and many he did not want, for he could not assimilate and use them to his own ends. This at least partly explains the reason why so many prominent persons, who became converts of Beissel, remained at Ephrata only long enough to find out the man and the character of his work.

It is not strange, therefore, that there should be a serious reaction when Mack died, owing to the time and conditions in which he died. The newly organized churches (organized in the years immediately preceding his death) indicated the prosperity and progress of the cause for which he stood. But the organizations were too new to endure much of a strain. They needed time to grow, as well as time to crystallize the doctrine and concentrate their strength. There was not time enough to do all of this. As may be expected, the most serious effect was at Germantown; because here were those who knew him best and loved him most, and therefore most deeply mourned the loss of his personal presence. These had come with him in 1729 and had never known any other leadership and ministry than his. Among these were Alexander Mack, Jr., then a young man of 23 years of age, very active in the church, but disheartened when his father died whom he dearly loved. He became somewhat despondent and believed that he too would soon die. There were others who became indifferent and were ready to drift with circumstances. Under these distressing conditions, there comes upon the scene a new and strange character. He was not a stranger, however, but an old friend and believer, who now turns into a strange history. He was a believer already in Germany, and according to the old record, he was a minister at Crefeld before 1715. He came to Germantown in 1719, in the first emigration, and sat at the first Love-feast table on December 25, 1723. In some way or other a great change came over the man. He early leaned to Beissel, and yet Beissel was unfriendly to him, because he and Henry Traut visited Stuntz who had been excommunicated by Beissel. He was especially intimate with Traut, who was at one time a professed be-

liever in the teaching of the Hermits of the Ridge, and had taken the vow of celibacy, but afterwards married a widow. This man was Stephen Koch. He states that the immediate cause of his spiritual unrest was the death of Traut, January 4, 1733. His troubles multiplied. He had been seized with the spirit of mysticism. He was strong under the conviction that he should take the vow of celibacy, and yet he was betrothed to a widow. In addition he states that he was a great sufferer from physical ailment, so that he at times lay for days in the greatest extremity.

Under these circumstances, Koch began to have ecstatic visions, which he related from time to time, and some of which were published, first in Germany and also by Christopher Saur, of Germantown,<sup>1</sup> "Apparitions of Spirits," 1st edition, 1744; 2d edition, 1748. The nature of these apparitions may best be given by an example, as related in his own words: "On the third of May, 1735, at Germantown, as late at night I went behind the house into the orchard, it being bright moonlight, there came to me a delightful odor, partly from the blossoms of the trees, partly from the flowers in the garden, whereat I sobbing spoke to God: 'O, my God, everything is in its order and contributes to Thy glory and honor, save I alone! For I am created and called by a holy calling to love Thee above everything and to become a pleasant savor unto the glorifying of Thy name. Now, however, I behold the contradiction, for I not only do not love Thee as I ought, but am also become an evil smell in Thy nostrils. Alas, unfortunate that I am! Must I then pass my days in such mis-

---

<sup>1</sup> See list of publications on Sower Chart, by CHAS. G. SOWER, *Verschiedene alte und neuere Geschichten von Erscheinungen der Geister*, 1st Ed., 1744; 2d Ed., 1748.



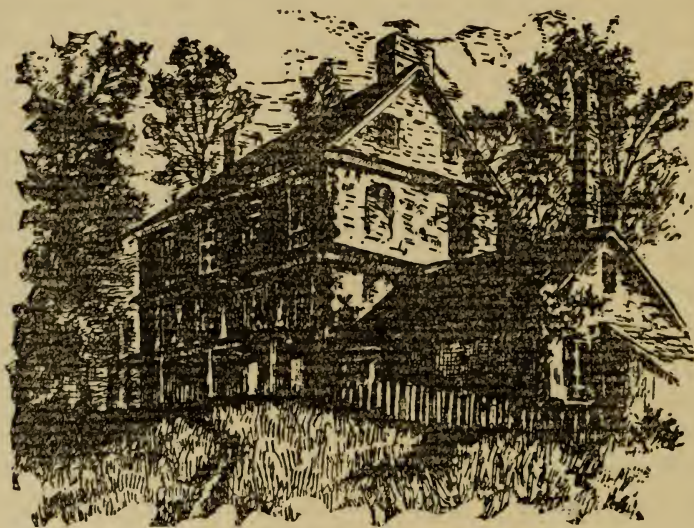
ery? I gladly would love God, the highest good, but I cannot. The world with all its glories cannot satisfy my sad spirit, for I ever see before my eyes spiritual and bodily death.'

"While I thus lamented to God, it seemed to me as though suddenly a flame of God's love struck into me, which entirely illumined me within, and I heard a voice say to me: 'Yet one thing thou lackest.' I asked, 'What is it then?' The answer was, 'Thou dost not know God and never hast really known him.' I said, 'Yes, that is so, but how shall I attain to it?' Then it seemed as though I were beside myself. But when I came to myself again, I felt an inexpressibly pleasing love to God in my heart, and on the other hand all anxiety, with all the temptations of the unclean spirits, had vanished. Yea, it seemed as if all my transgressions were pardoned and sealed, and day and night there was nothing else in my heart but joy, love and praise to God."

These visions continued from time to time for several years, and Koch freely related them and sought every opportunity to promulgate his strange doctrines. In this work he had plenty of help from Ephrata, as frequent visits were made from there to Germantown. He now determined to live a secluded solitary life, and retired to the quiet of Wissahickon. He greatly influenced with his visions the young Alexander Mack, still grieving over the death of his father; also Henry Kalckglasser and others. He readily induced Mack to retire with him to the Wissahickon. There was much agitation, and Koch made converts until the congregation was more or less divided. Receiving all possible encouragement, Koch now commenced to hold public meetings of his own, which meetings were frequently addressed by Peter Miller and others from Ephrata.



The crisis was finally reached, and Koch and his adherents marched out of Germantown, most of them never to return. They journeyed to Ephrata, there to bury themselves in seclusion behind monastic walls. A few, when they realized their disappointment, repented and returned; others there were who died in the sadness and solitude of their disappointment. Perhaps most of this exodus took place March 27, 1739. It was a sad day for Germantown;



THE OLD "MONASTERY" ON THE WISSAHICKON.

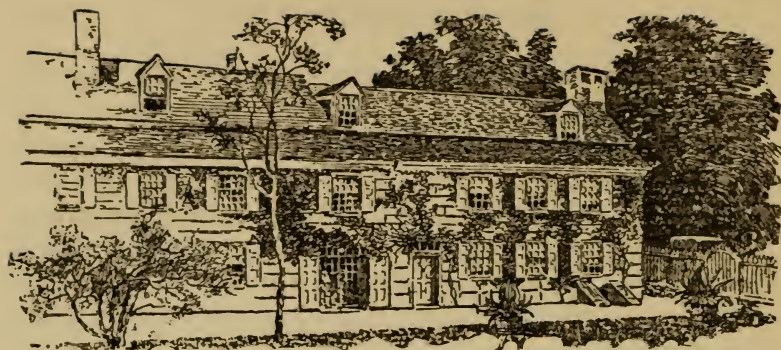
many valuable members had been lost, and some of the best families were represented. There was probably only one thing that maintained Germantown under these circumstances, and that was the faithful devotion of Elder Peter Becker and those who stood with him.

The following names are given as composing the exodus of 1739: Stephen Koch; Heinrich Kalckgläser, and wife; Valentine Mack, and wife Maria (Hilderbrand); Louis

Höcker, his wife Margretha, and daughter Maria; Johannes Hilderbrand, and wife; Johannes Pettikoffer, and wife Anna Elizabeth; the widow Gorgas and her children. Among the single persons who joined the celibates at Ephrata, besides Koch, were Alexander Mack, Johannes Reismann, Christian Eckstein, Heinrich Höcker, Martha Kinsing, Miriam Gorgas and Elizabeth Eckstein.

The chapter that follows indicates the condition of things, thirty years later, among the Brethren congregations in Pennsylvania. Alexander Mack's return will be considered in the chapter on Germantown.





THE "WYCK" HOUSE GERMANTOWN.

## CHAPTER X.

### EARLY CONGREGATIONS.



T has already been noted that the Brethren, on coming to America, were scattered into distant parts of the country, settling in the various places that offered conditions best suited to their tastes. In due time these scattered settlements became congregations which at an early day well covered the entire eastern part of Pennsylvania. These congregations, at first small and struggling, in due time had many accessions to their numbers, until many families were represented in the membership, wherever these congregations were located. Hundreds of German families were thus enrolled before the close of the century, and tens of thousands of Pennsylvania-German descendants find that their ancestors were enrolled as members of the Brethren church, in the early German settlements of eastern Pennsylvania. For lists of members of these early congregations, we are largely indebted to Morgan Edwards, that thoughtful and far-seeing historian,

who gathered so much valuable information in his *Materials towards a History of the American Baptists*. In some cases the lists of membership he gives are practically the only ones in existence. I freely quote from him in the materials for this chapter. See as above named, Vol. 1, Part IV.<sup>1</sup> He wrote in the year 1770.

BEGGARSTOWN.—GERMANTOWN.<sup>2</sup>

“This takes its distinction from a little village of the above name, in the township of Germantown, eight miles northwest from the city. The meeting house is of stone, thirty feet square, erected this year, on a lot of eighty rods, the gift of one Peter Shilbert. On the same lot stands their old building erected by one John Pettikoffer for his dwelling house in 1731. The families belonging to this congregation are about thirty; whereof fifty-seven persons are baptized and in the communion of the church. This was their state in 1770. For their beginning we have no further back to look than December 25, 1723.

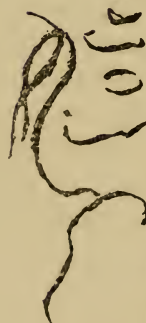
“The membership in 1770 was as follows: Alexander Mack, minister, with his wife and daughter, Christopher Sower, exhorter, with his wife and son, Margaret Boyer, deaconess, George Shriber and wife, Henry Slingluff and two daughters, Philip Weaver and wife, Richard Roob, Michael Keyser, Peter Keyser and wife, Peter Lybert and wife, John Slingluff and wife, Henry Slingluff, Anthony Snyder and wife, Jacob Bowman and wife, Justus Fox and wife, John Kime, Conrad Good, Conrad Stamm and wife, Hannah Stamm, Mary Baker, Sarah

---

<sup>1</sup>The copy I had access to was kindly loaned by its present owner, Chas. M. Benson, Germantown. The book was once the property of Henry Sharpnack.

<sup>2</sup>See chapter on Germantown.




 Tosen Dicky  
 wir mit  
 Johannes Lentz  
 Beggarstown Jan 8<sup>th</sup> December  
 1789

TITLE OF JOHANNES LENTZ' HYMN-BOOK.

Only known book bearing the name Beggarstown. Original in possession of Mr. James Warrington.



Baker, Susannah Baker, Eve Fith, Elizabeth Boyer, Mary Bossert, Margaret Herszback, Magdalen Mellinger, Elizabeth Roob, Christian de Lashet and wife, William Spyra and wife, Nathaniel Shryber, Katharine Shryber, Henry Sharpnack and wife, Mary Nyse, Rudolph Harly and wife, Mary Fend, Sybelia Ent.

“ GREATSWAMP.

“ This society is distinguished by the above name, which is a name of a tract of land called the Greatswamp. The meeting is kept at the house of Mr. John Frick in Upper-milford township, in the county of Bucks, about 40 miles northwest from Philadelphia. The families belonging to the society are about 20 whereof 28 persons are baptized. Thus stood things with them in 1770. Their beginning was in this manner. In the year 1733 one Salome Miller and Joseph Miller her brother, John Brech and wife, Peter Longanacre and Peter Rhode were baptized by Mr. John Naass. In 1735 were baptized by Mr. Peter Baker and Mr. Martin Urner, one Hanse Zuk and wife, John Sleifer, and John Frick and wife ; and the same time had the Lord's supper administered to them by Mr. Peter Baker. This was the period of their existence as a society ; and 11 their number. They have existed for 35 years without any remarkable event, except that count Zeinzendorf took away some of them in the year 1752. At first they were visited by ministers from other parts, and increased fast. Several of the Mennonites joined them. But since that time the increase has been inconsiderable. The first settled minister they had was

“ REV. ABRAHAM DUBOY.

“ He was born in 1679 at Epstein in Germany. Bred a Presbyterian. Embraced the principles of the Baptists in

1712. Came to America in 1728. Settled at Perkiomen ; and from thence went to the Greatswamp in 1738, where he died and was buried March, 1748. Since that time Mr. John Frick hath preached to them ; but is not ordained." It seems that Duboy was a minister already in Germany and was a man of considerable prominence. He joined the church in the Marienborn district, but a few years later joined the mother congregation at Swartzenau and became an assistant to Alexander Mack. He was a modest, pious and devoted man. He was unmarried. A. H. Cassel, the antiquarian, relates of him that he had a strange presentiment of his death. On the morning of the day on which he died he informed the family where he lived that the time of his departure had come. He dressed in a shroud and invited the family to join him in singing "*Nun fahr ich hin mit Freuden, ins rechte Vaterland,*" etc., then, after a fervent prayer, he reclined on a couch and breathed his last, as one would fall into a quiet sleep.

The following is the list of members as given by Morgan Edwards : John Frick, exhorter, and wife, Laurence Erboch and wife, Andrew Meinzinger, John Demud and wife, John Sleifer and wife, Henry Kun, Philip Goodman and wife, Philip Deal, Frederick Deal, John Redroch and wife, Egite Christian and wife, Lodowick Christian and wife, Jacob Staut and wife, Mary Christian, widow Rinker, Catherine Rinker, widow Olinger, widow Crayling, Freny Trissel.

#### COVENTRY.

This was the second congregation organized. It had a large number of accessions from time to time and has maintained a continuous existence until the present time. It has furnished many members for colonization in different parts of the country. The church has had an efficient

ministry. Its first members were "The First Fruits of the Church in America," as already noted in the organization of Germantown. Because of its early importance, it will be of interest to give some detail of its history, at least its earlier history.

Professor I. N. Urner, as an introduction to his history of the *Urner Family*, writes a sketch of the history of the Coventry church, from which I quote as follows: "As the Urners were the founders of the Coventry Brethren church, and its preachers and bishops for the first eighty-seven years of its existence, a sketch of its history seems the proper introduction to the genealogy of the Urner family.

"The Coventry church took its name from the township in which it is located, and the township is supposed to have received its name through Samuel Nutt, an early settler and iron-master, who came from Coventry, in Warwickshire, in England. The township first took the name Coventry in the year 1724, the same year in which the church was organized. \* \* \* At its formation, the township of Coventry comprised not only the land along the Schuylkill River, now North Coventry, East Coventry, South Coventry, but all of the upper part of Chester County, and even a part of the present county of Lancaster."

The organization of this congregation on November 7, 1724, has already been noted in Chapter VI., and its constituent members named at the same time.

"While it had many accessions, its growth in number was retarded by heavy colonizations from the Church. The members were mostly farmers, and while the land was good, the lands in other localities were better. Some moved to what was then called the Conecocheague, now

embraced in Franklin and Perry counties, in Pennsylvania, and Washington County, Maryland; some to the Shenandoah Valley, in Virginia; and some to Carroll and Frederick counties, in Maryland, where the Urners, the Wolfes, and the Crumbachers are still found."

The Coventry Church was in charge of Elder Peter Becker of Germantown, from the time of its organization until 1729. The first resident minister was Martin Urner, who was ordained to the Eldership by Alexander Mack, Sr., in 1729, at which time he took upon himself the care of the church. The following account is given of this Martin Urner, Sr., in *Urner Family*: "Martin Urner, the founder of the Coventry Brethren church, and its first bishop, was born in Alsace, then a province of France, in the year 1695. The family had been driven by religious persecution out of the Canton of Uri, Switzerland, whence the name Urner, and took refuge in Alsace. About 1708, Ulrich Urner, with his three sons—Jacob, Hans and Martin—emigrated to Pennsylvania, and is said to have settled for awhile at Roxborough, near Philadelphia. In 1712 the name of Martin Urner appears among the settlers of Lancaster county. In 1718 he bought a tract of four hundred and fifty acres of land of the Penns, in what is now called Coventry township, Chester county, Pennsylvania, on the Schuylkill river, immediately opposite the present town of Pottstown. On this property, now called Bellwood, he and his descendants lived long years afterwards, and on part of the land the Coventry Brethren church and the Coventry Brethren graveyard are located. He died in 1755, and was buried in the Coventry Brethren graveyard."

Thus it will be seen Martin Urner was born in 1695; came to America in 1708; was baptized in 1723; was ordained in 1729, and died in 1755.



Morgan Edwards gives the following view of the church in 1770: "This takes its distinction from the township where most of the members reside, in the county of Chester, 37 miles from Philadelphia. Coventry is on the banks of the Schuylkill, opposite to Potsgrove. These people have no public place of worship, but hold their meetings in a kind of rotation at five private houses. The present minister is Mr. Martin Urner, who has to his assistance Mr. Peter Reinhart. The families belonging to them are about 22, whereof 40 persons are baptized. This was their state in 1770."

While they had no meeting-house in 1770, they probably built their first house in 1772, two years after Germantown had been built. The Martin Urner referred to in the account of Morgan Edwards, is the second Martin Urner, nephew of the first. He was a son of Jacob Urner and was born in 1725, one mile northeast of the present town of Pottstown, in New Hanover township, then in Philadelphia county, Pennsylvania, but now in Montgomery county. He joined the church at an early age, and was a very active and prominent preacher in his day. After the death of his uncle in 1755, he was ordained elder or bishop of the Coventry church in 1756, and was in charge of the congregation until his death in 1799. The church flourished under his ministry. This second Martin Urner was an intimate friend of the second Alexander Mack of Germantown.

"List of Preachers of the Coventry Brethren Church from 1724 to 1893," according to I. N. Urner:

	Born.	Died.
Martin Urner, Sr.,	1695	1775
Martin Urner, Jr.,	1725	1799
Jonas Urner,	1772	1813



	Born.	Died.
Casper Ingles,		
Peter Rinhart,	1733	1806
Martin Rinhart,	1757	1820
Abraham Rinhart,	1770	1842
George Price,	1753	1823
John Price, Sr.,	1782	1850
John Price, Jr.,	1810	1879
Jacob Harley,	1786	1842
John Harley,	1812	
David Keim,	1802	
Peter Hollobush,	1805	1872
Jacob Conner,	1834	
Isaac Urner Brower,	1844	
Jesse P. Hetric,	1844	
John Y. Eisenburg,	1840	

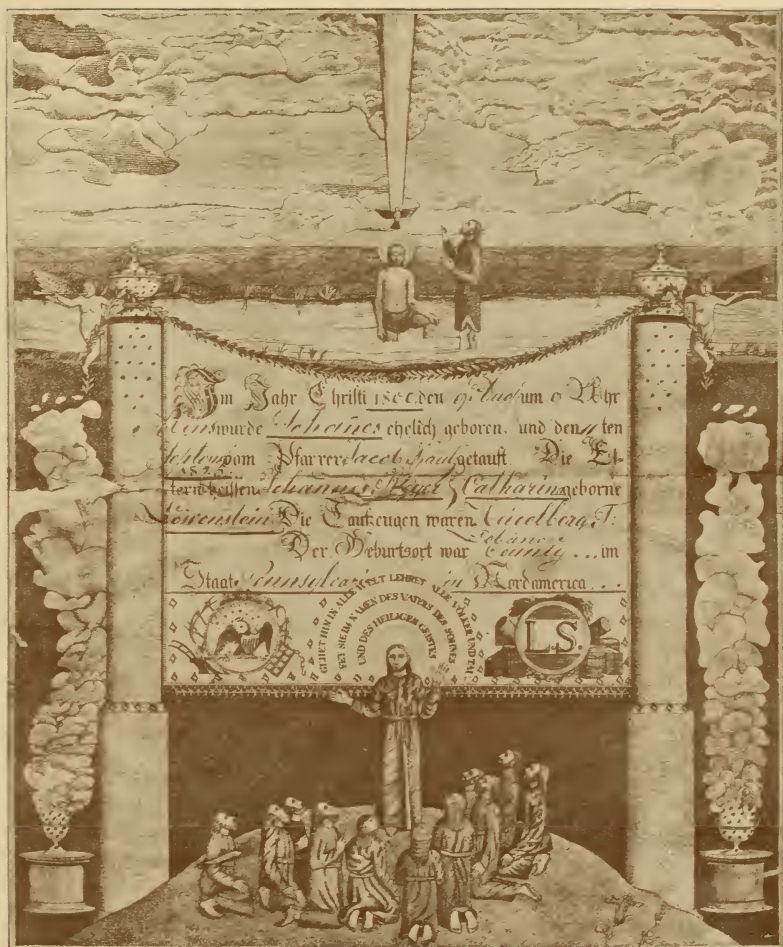
List of members in 1770, of the Coventry Brethren church :

Martin Urner, minister, and wife, Peter Reinhart, exhorter, Owen Reinhart, Henry Dasker and wife, Nicholas Harwick and wife, Abraham Grub and wife, Christian Monsieur, Barbara Miller, Barbara Welty, Frederick Reinhart and wife, Barbara Urner, Elizabeth Ingles, Catherine Grumbacker, Catharine Boch, John Eiker, Jacob Pfauts and wife, Abraham Boch, Andrew Woolf, Easter Switser, Wendle Danfelsner, Henry Bear and wife, Jacob Sweitser and wife, Maud Reinhart, Jacob Light and wife, Philip Waggoner and wife, Eliz. Holderman, Anthony Bernard and daughter, John Light and wife.

#### OLEY.

“This society takes its distinction from the township where most of the people reside, in the county of Berks, fifty-four miles northwest from Philadelphia. The present

THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



DUNKER BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE.

JOHANNES REYER BORN AUG. 9, 1800; BAPTIZED SEPT., 1825.

ENGRAVED BY C. F. EGELMAN.

ORIGINAL IN SACHSE COLLECTION.



preachers are Mess. Martin Gaby and Jacob Joder, but not ordained. The families belonging to the place are about twelve, whereof twenty persons are baptized. This is their present state. They had their beginning about 1732, when one Ritters, Shilbert, Blanth and others, did unite for communion of saints, having Peter Baker to their assistance. Since this time they have no ordained minister, but are visited by Rev. George Kleine. This church is much reduced by reason of removals of families to other parts, particularly to Conecocheague in 1743."

It will be noticed that here, as elsewhere, Peter Becker, of Germantown, was active in organizing the work, and that the Oley church, like Coventry and, in fact, all the early congregations, lost heavily by colonizations to other parts. Thus all the congregations furnished their quota towards making up the advance guard that gradually carried the influence of the church into every new territory in the opening up of the Great West. For many years they were visited by Elder George Kleine, of the Tulpehocken, so active and helpful in many places. While Martin Gaby was not ordained in 1770, he was ordained some years later.

The membership in 1770 was as follows: Martin Gaby, exhorter, and wife; John Joder, exhorter, and wife; Conrad Price and wife, David Price and wife, David Kinsey and wife, Jacob Baker and wife, Christian Kinsey and wife, Peter Kleine, Liss Ellis, Margaret Harpine, Catharine Plank, Daniel Kleine and wife.

#### COCALICO.—CONESTOGA.

"This society is distinguished by the above name which is the name of a little river near to which the people reside, in Cocalico township and county of Lancaster, 60 miles w n w from Philadelphia. The minister is Rev.

Jacob Sunday, who has Mr. John Landis to his assistance. Mr. Sunday was born in Germany in 1700, came to this country in 1735, was ordained in 1763, at which time he took on him the oversight of the church. He married Mary Landis by whom he has one son. The families belonging to the society are about 53 whereof 86 persons are baptized. This is their present state. They originated about the year 1735, when the following persons separated from the church of Ephrata and became a distinct society viz. : Michael Pffauts, Rant Woolf, John Frantz, Emick Reyer, George Reyer, John Landis, Samuel Good, Henry Sneider, Philip Rouland and others, having Rev. Peter Baker to their assistance. The first minister they had was Rev. Michael Frantz, a native of Switzerland. He was ordained in 1734, and the next year took on him the oversight of the church. He died in 1748 and was buried at Cocalico. After his death Rev. Michael Pffautz and others preached to them until their present minister was ordained."

The above account is concerning the Conestoga congregation. It will be remembered that there was a great missionary tour undertaken from Germantown, in the fall of 1724, led by Elder Peter Becker. See Chapter VI. for full description. Upon this occasion there were a number baptized in the Conestoga country, and a church was organized on November 12, 1724, with Conrad Beissel as minister. He soon preached his strange doctrines, and in 1728 left the Conestoga church and took many members with him to form his new organization, which ultimately he located as the Ephrata Monastic Community. The Germantown Brethren took care of the remnant for some time, until about the year 1735, when they were organized according to the above account. Elder Michael Frantz



was their first minister and leader. He was born in Switzerland in 1687; came to America in the year 1727, and settled on the Conestoga. He proved a giant of strength to the little congregation, and in a few years of his ministry it prospered greatly and there were several hundred accessions. He was an energetic and efficient workman. His ministry was not long, for he died in 1747 or 1748; but he left the work in a well-organized condition, and he was succeeded in the Eldership by Michael Pfautz, whose ministry was equally efficient and successful. He was born in Germany in 1709, and came to America in 1727. Having been ordained by Elder Frantz just a few weeks before his death, Elder Pfautz remained in charge of the congregation for more than twenty years, during which time large numbers were added to the Church by baptism. He died in 1769, and was succeeded by Elder Jacob Sonntag; but it seems that Elder Christian Longenecker of the Whiteoakland Church, was in charge of the congregation.

In 1770, the membership was as follows: Rev. Jacob Sondag and wife, John Landis, exhorter, and wife, Peter Eychelberger and wife, Michael Frantz and wife, Henry Mohler and wife, Peter Reyer and wife, Tobias Millar and wife, Christopher Becker and wife, Elizabeth Lessley, Catharine Harlacher, Ann Mohler, Magdalene Millinger, Daniel Ballinger and wife, John Rosh and wife, Daniel Reyer and wife, John Reyer and wife, Martin Meyer and wife, Jeremiah Woolf and wife, George Schwarts and wife, Jacob Landis and wife, David Landis, Christopher Westenberger and wife, Jacob Sponhauer and wife, Christopher Widder and wife, Jacob Knodel and wife, Salome Harlacher, Barbara Frantz, Catherine Reyer, Margaret Landis, Barbara Steiner, Barbara Schob, Henry Schneider and wife, Daniel Hollinger and wife, Christopher Reyer

and wife, John Meyer and wife, Samuel Good and wife, Eva Sychrift, Jeremiah Woolf, Jr., and wife, Jonas Joner and wife, Jacob Heller and wife, Mrs. Histant, Mrs. Moser, Mrs. Behr, Christopher Haas and wife, Jacob Harnley and wife, Magdalene Landis, Mary Frantz, Magdalene Belenger, Mary Koch, Barbara Koch, Henry Schneider, Jr., and wife, Susannah Landis, Catherine Landis.

The Conestoga church had an able, aggressive and efficient ministry, and before the close of the century, there were probably five hundred baptized members, the work of those years. Many of these members, scattered by colonization, far and wide, laid the foundation for many new congregations in this and other States.

#### WHITEOAKLAND.—WHITE OAK CHURCH.

“This society is distinguished as above from a tract of land so called, in the parish of Warwick, Lancaster county, 75 miles west by north from Philadelphia, and two miles from Lititz. They hold their meetings at private houses. The minister is Rev. Christian Longanacre, who was born November 11, 1732, in Raffo township. Ordained May 15, 1769, at which time he took on him the care of the church. He married Margaret Geib by whom he had six children. The families belonging to the society are about 39, whereof 65 persons are baptized. This is their present state. They began in this manner. About the year 1729 one George Reyer, John Langanacre and others came from Germany and settled in this neighborhood. After them came several more from other places who in the year 1736 united together and had the Lord’s Supper administered to them by Rev. Michael Pffautz. He was their first minister but lived at Cocalico. He married Catherine Schluch by whom he had four children. Was ordained

in the year 1735. Died May 21, 1769, leaving behind him a good character."

The list of members in 1770 was as follows : Rev. Christian Langanacre and wife, John Zug and wife, Christian Zug and wife, John Langanacre and wife, John Pffautz and wife, Henry Kuensing, Jacob Kuensing and wife, Christian Krabel and wife, Jacob Zug and wife, widow Huber, Catherine Bitner, Elizabeth Reir, Abraham Flohry and wife, Conrad Gingle, George Mohler and wife, Elizabeth Huft, Martin Schuh and wife, Henry Giebel and wife, Barbara Eby and four daughters, Henry Eter and wife, Elizabeth Langanacre, Henry Langanacre and wife, Ulrick Langanacre, John Hackman and wife, Henry Stholer and wife, John Lautermilch and wife, George Kleine and wife, Catherine Gish, John Frantz and wife, Ann Huber, Fronica ———, Catherine Reyer, Salome Borgart, Mrs. Kratzer, Conrad Hausser and wife, and George Stohler and wife, Jacob Hershy and wife, Andrew Eby and wife.

#### GREATSWARTARO.—BIG SWATARA CHURCH.

"This church is so distinguished from a river near to which the people dwell; and sometimes by the name of Eastconewago which is another river that runs through the neighborhood. The meeting is held chiefly at private houses in the township of Mount Joy, county of Lancaster, 20 miles from Lancaster and 86 miles west by north from Philadelphia. Their preachers are Messrs. George Miller and Adam Hammaker, but not ordained. The families belonging to the congregation are about twenty, whereof 39 persons are baptized. This is their present state. They began in this manner. In the year 1752 the said George Miller embraced the principles of the Baptists, and soon after, his wife. Others moved hither from White-

oakland, and in the year 1756 united into a society, having Rev. Michael Pfautz to their assistance. He continued to visit them while he lived; and after him, others. They purpose soon to ordain Mr. Miller to be their minister."

The 39 members in 1770 were as follows: George Miller, exhorter, and wife and daughter, Adam Hammacker, exhorter, and wife and daughter, Peter Eritzstone and wife, Philip Roemer and wife, John Buck and wife, John Eter and wife, Jacob Metsegar and wife, Henry Thomas and wife, Christopher Branser and wife, Margaret Thomas, Philip Reicker and wife, Peter Bersh and wife, Henry Stohner and wife, Wendel Merich and wife, Frederick Hess and wife, Jacob Eter and wife, George Balshbach and wife, George Henry and wife, Barbara Henry, Freny Cass.

#### LITTLE SWATARA CHURCH.

"This church also takes its distinction from a river of the above name, in the township of Tulpehocken and county of Berks, twenty-five miles from Reading and eighty-one miles northwest from Philadelphia. Some of the people live in Bether township, in Lancaster county. They hold their worship in private houses. Their preacher is Mr. Peter Heckman, but is not ordained. The families belonging to the society are about nineteen, whereof forty-five persons are baptized. This is their present state. Their beginning was in this manner: About year 1745 one George Beshert settled in this neighborhood, and one Michael Frantz, Peter Heckman, John Frantz and others. These were baptized by Rev. George Kleine, and in 1757 coalesced into a church, having the said Kleine to their assistance. He has ministered the Lord's supper to them



ever since, but they purpose soon to ordain Mr. Peter Heckman."

The members were as follows: Peter Heckman, minister, and wife, Jacob Heckman and wife, Michael Frantz and wife, Nicholas Gerst and wife, Jacob Moyer and wife, George Beasher, David Marge and wife, Simon Menich and wife, John Frantz and wife, Christian Frantz and wife, Rose Shnables, Jacob Smith and wife, Liss Kentzel, Adam Henrich, Mrs. Cyder, Philip Zeigler and wife, Jacob Breisen and wife, David Kleine and wife, widow Benedict, Elizabeth Benedict, Sophy Kish, Leonard Sebalt and wife, John Grove, Jacob Baker and wife, Jacob Deal and wife, Hans Stohler and wife, Jacob Beshor and wife.

#### NORTHKILL.

This is an illustration of how each scattered settlement became an organization, wherever there were a few members to form a nucleus. It shows too how some relatively small congregations maintained their existence under very unfavorable conditions. Because of an unfavorable frontier position and colonization to other parts, Northkill made very slow progress for many years. We know little of its early struggles except what Morgan Edwards records. I might take his facts and dress them up in other language, as others have done, but I have preferred in this case, as in the case of the other congregations, to use his own language, which is often interestingly quaint. In this region of the Tulpehocken, there is by that name to-day a strong and flourishing congregation and has been for many years.

"This little society is distinguished as above from a small river called Northkill, in the townships of Tulpehocken and Bern, county of Berks, 15 miles from Reading, and 71 miles northwest by west from Philadelphia. The



minister is Rev. George Kleine. He was born at Zweinbrecken in Germany, October 9, 1715. Came to America in 1738. Was baptized in 1739 by Mr. Naas of Amwell in the Jersey. Ordained in 1757 by Revs. Michael Pfautz and Martin Urner. He married Dorothy Repman by whom he has seven children. The families belonging to them are seven, whereof 11 persons are baptized and in fellowship. This is their present state. They began to be a church about the year 1748 when one John Stump and sister, Frederick and wife, with a few more, had the Lord's supper administered to them by the Rev. Michael Pfautz. About two years after, their present minister settled among them. The society was reduced to its now low estate, by the removal of families to other parts."

The members were as follows: Rev. George Kleine, minister and wife, Valentine Lang, Elizabeth Reiler, Elizabeth Stump, Sarah Solenberger, John Stohner and wife, Mary Stohner, Susanna Mackley, Elizabeth Brandel.

#### CODORUS.

It has already been noticed in connection with the history of different congregations in Lancaster county and other sections in the eastern part of the State that there was much colonization at an early day. This migration and colonization was first to the southern counties of Pennsylvania and then into various counties in Maryland and Virginia and even south as far as North Carolina. It was not until after the Revolutionary War that western emigration was open to any extent. The Brethren at an early day crossed the Susquehanna, entered what is now York county, and occupied hundreds of its fertile acres. The strong congregations within the county to-day attest their prosperity for one hundred and sixty years.

The following account is given of early settlements that became permanent: "This society is distinguished as above from a river that is called Codorus, in a township of the same name in the county of York, 11 miles from the town of York, and 99 miles west by south from Philadelphia. The preacher is Mr. Henry Neff, but he is not ordained. The families belonging to the place are about twenty whereof thirty-five are baptized and members of the church. This is their present state. They began to be a church about the year 1758 when one Rudy Yunt, Peter Brilharth, John Brilharth and others, united for communion of saints, having Rev. Jacob Tanner to their assistance. This Tanner left them to go to Monocasy; since, they have been supplied from other places. Mr. Neff will soon be ordained."

The membership in 1770 was as follows: Henry Neff, exhorter, and wife, Jacob Tilman and wife and daughter, Jacob Spitler and wife and two daughters, Peter Brilharth and wife, Jacob Neiswanger and wife, Ann Neiswanger, Catherine Beightley, Elizabeth Leip, George Beary and wife, John Harold and wife, Rudy Yundt and wife, William Spitler and wife, Christian Eby and wife, Wendel Baker and wife, Michael Berkey and wife, George Ettor and son, Mathias Sitler and wife, Susanna Weltner.

#### LITTLE CONEWAGO.

"This society is so distinguished from a branch of the river Conewago near to which the people made their settlements, in the township of Hanover and county of York, 20 miles from the town of York and 107 miles west by south from Philadelphia. The preachers are Messrs. Jacob Moyer and James Henrick, but are not ordained. The families belonging to the place are about 40, whereof

52 persons are baptized. Their beginning was in 1738 when one Eldrick, Dierdorff, Bigler, Gripe, Studsman and others united into a church, having Rev. Daniel Leatherman to their assistance. He left them and went to Monocasy; after him they had Rev. Nicholas Martin who also quitted them to go to Conecocheague; of both which we shall speak when we come to the Baptists in Maryland. Their successors are the present ministers, before mentioned." It seems the volume promised on Maryland was never issued; at any rate I have no knowledge of such volume being in existence.<sup>1</sup> Many members went to the Conecocheague and to Monocasy, from the various congregations in Pennsylvania; and among them were prominent and efficient ministers, but we know little of their work in the early days. The scores of congregations of the present day, however, attest the faithful devotion of these pioneers and the success of the migration to the "Southland."

The membership of the Little Conewago congregation in 1770 was as follows: Jacob Moyer, exhorter, and wife, James Henrick, exhorter, and wife, Hans Adam Sneider and wife, Barbara Sneider, George Wine and wife, John Geiny, Daniel Woods and wife, Henry Geiny and wife, Joseph Moyer and wife, Nicholas Housteter and wife, Christian Housteter, Rudy Brown and wife, Dobis Brother and wife, Jacob Miller and wife, Michael Koutz and wife, Mrs. Powser, Mrs. Moyer, Stephen Peter, wife and daughter, Maud Powser, George Peter, Henry Tanner and wife, Michael Tanner and wife, John Moyer and wife, Jacob Souder and wife, Henry Hoeff and wife, Hesther

---

<sup>1</sup> I am informed by J. F. Sachse that the volume on Maryland was written, but not published, and in MS. form it burned in the late fire of the Baptist Publication Society.

Weise, Christian Etor, John Peter Weaver, Barbara Bear, John Swarts and wife, Liss Bearing, Great Hymen.

## CONEWAGO.

“This society also takes its distinction from a river of the above name near to which the people reside, in the township of Reading, county of York, 14 miles from the town of York and 101 miles west from Philadelphia. Their preacher is Mr. George Brown, who is not ordained. The families are about 45, whereof 77 persons are baptized. Their beginning, as a society, was in the year 1741 when John Neagly, Adam Sower, Jacob Sweigard, Peter Neiper, Joseph Larzcho, etc., did unite for communion of saints, having to their assistance Rev. George Adam Martin, of whom more hereafter. Next to him were Rev. Daniel Leatherman and Nicholas Martin, of whom we shall speak when we come to Maryland.”

The following were the members in 1770: George Brown, exhorter, and wife, Peter Werds, John Heiner and wife, Peter Fox and wife, Anthony Dierdorff and wife, John Dierdorff and wife, Nicholas Moyer and wife, Manass Bruch and wife, Michael Basserman and wife, David Erhard and wife, Ann Mummard, Daniel Baker and wife, Abraham Stauffer and wife, Henry Dierdorff and wife, John Burckholter and wife, Christian Fray, Andrew Trimmer and wife, Ustace Reinfel and wife, Samuel Arnold, Peter Dierdorff and wife, Barnet Achenbach and wife, Mary Latzcho, Catherine Studyker, John Neagley and wife, Michael Brissel and wife, Velte Brissel and wife, Mathias Bouser and wife, and daughter, Laurence Baker and wife, Nicholas Bakener, Philip Snell and wife, Nicholas Bakener, Jr., and wife, Adam Sower and wife, and two daughters, Adam Dick and wife, Marilis Baker,



Henry Brissel and wife, David Brissel and wife, Sarah Brissel, Henry Rudibush and wife, George Waggoner and wife, Jacob Miller, Mrs. Martsh, Rudolph Brown, George Reeson and wife.

#### BERMUDIAN.

“This society also is distinguished by the above name of a little river, in the township of Warrington and county of York, 15 miles from the town of York and 102 miles west by north from Philadelphia. Most of these people observe the seventh day of the week for sabbath, and are to be considered as the offspring of Ephrata church. Their preacher is Mr. Henry Lowman, who is not ordained. The families are about 40, whereof 58 persons are baptized. They began to be a church in 1758 when Philip Gebel, Peter Beissel, Henry Lowman and others united for communion of saints, having Rev. Conrad Beissel to their assistance. Afterwards Rev. mess. Peter Miller and George Adam Martin and others officiated among them.”

It will thus be seen that the Bermudian congregation was in the first place under the control of Beissel influence. After the death of Beissel, and Peter Miller ceased to visit the place, and Martin removed to Stony Creek, in Bedford, the congregation passed under the influence of the Brethren and has so remained until the present day.

The following is a list of members in 1770: Henry Lowman, exhorter, and wife, Frederick Reuter, wife and daughter, Daniel Fahnstick and wife, Peter Henry, wife and mother, Dietrick Fahnstick and wife, Paul Traub and wife, Sebastian Shalles and wife, John Cook, wife and son, Peter Bender and wife, Melchoir Webber and wife, John Bence, wife and daughter and four sons, — Frick, John Lehn and wife, John Messerbach and wife, John Miller, wife and two sons, George Reiss, George Neiss and wife,



Benjamin Gebel and wife, Philip Gebel, Peter Beussel, wife and son and daughter, Philip Beussel and wife, Belzar Smith and wife, Adam Weyley and wife, Mrs. Dorothy, — Stauffer, Elizabeth Foltz.

## STONY CREEK.

“This is also denominated from a little river of the above name, in the township Bruederthal (alias Brotherstown) in the county of Bedford, 30 miles from Bedford and 245 miles west by north from Philadelphia. The minister is Rev. George Adam Martin, of whom mention has been made before. He was born near Landstuhl in Germany in the year 1715. Was bred a Presbyterian. Embraced the principles of the Baptists in 1737, and was ordained by Peter Baker in 1739. Afterwards he resided at Little Conewago, where some misunderstanding arose between him and the people and occasioned him to remove to Antitum. In the year 1762 he adopted the sentiments of the seventh-day Baptists, and preached at Bermudian. From thence he went to Stony Creek this year. He married one of the Knippers and has many children. The families belonging to the place are 12, whereof 17 persons are baptized and may be considered as the constituents of the church, viz.: Rev. George Adam Martin and wife, Henry Roth and wife and daughter, Henry Roth, jun., and wife, George Newmoyer, Philip Oswald and wife and daughter, Abraham Gebel and wife, Philip Kimmel and wife, Mr. Widgebarger and wife. This church also is the offspring of Ephrata (for the most part); the seventh-day sabbath is kept.”

From the above account of Martin, it will be noticed that he had a rather checkered experience in roving about from place to place. He is said to have been a man of

good education. He was a man of excellent ability and at one time of great promise, but he was unsettled in his conviction that his work amounted to little, considering his prominence and ability. He ended his days at Stony Creek, and this congregation soon after passed to the control of the Brethren, and there are to-day many congregations in Bedford and Somerset counties.

“Thus we see that there are in this province fifteen churches of Tunker baptists, to which appertain eight ordained ministers, elders or bishops, and thirteen exhorters or probationers, and four meeting houses; the reason of their having no more places of worship is, that they choose rather to meet from house to house in imitation of the primitive Christians. We see also that their families are about four hundred and nineteen, which contain about two thousand and ninety-five souls allowing five to the family, whereof seven hundred and sixty-three persons are baptized and in communion.”

It must be noted that the above account of statistics includes the Ephrata congregation with one hundred and thirty-five members. It may be stated in passing that Beissel is already dead and the Monastic community has commenced to decline, but it is not necessary in this connection to describe Ephrata, because it forms no part of the Brethren congregations of 1770. In compiling this chapter on early congregations, I have largely used the materials and accounts of Rev. Morgan Edwards. In many important facts, we are almost entirely dependent upon him, and I desire to give full recognition to the value of his writings and descriptions of the early congregations of the Brethren. Because of the frontier conditions, the records of the scattered congregations are singularly incomplete. I have here presented in this chapter a compre-

hensive view of the church in the province of Pennsylvania, a few years before the breaking out of the Revolutionary War. I cannot in this connection give account of the church in New Jersey and Maryland and farther south. I have now described the organization and establishment of the Brethren church, and have to some extent traced its history for half a century. I have indicated, somewhat, the onward steps of conquest and progress across the frontier lines in the days of Penn's province. I hope it may be of interest to present some proofs that these people contributed elements of strength that were laid deep in the foundation of the commonwealth. In the opening of new territory, after the close of the Revolutionary War, the Brethren church presented her full share of her sturdy sons and daughters to organize the new industrial life and lay the foundations of the great commonwealths of the Middle West; and long before Ohio, Indiana and Illinois had reached the development of Statehood the Brethren church was well established there, and to-day 80,000 of her communicants are citizens of other commonwealths than Pennsylvania.





## CHAPTER XI.

### INDUSTRIAL LIFE.



HAVE been considering the history of the religious activities of the Brethren church, both as to their origin in Germany and a part of their onward progress in America. In this consideration I have confined myself to the religious life, and its relation to the religious life and spiritual activity in the growth and development of the province into a great State. But our great commonwealth is not a religious institution; its great arteries of trade and commerce and industry, throbbing and pulsating with such tremendous energy, indicate the most intense industrial activity everywhere to its remotest bounds. As citizens, what has been their relation and influence in the social, civil and material interests in commonwealth buildings? The social characteristics have ever been a marked feature in the life of this people. In their religious worship from house to house, their hospitality was ever large enough to invite the entire assembly. Indeed, hospitality is part of their religion, and they feed the multitude as the Master did of old, and hospitality is the basis of their





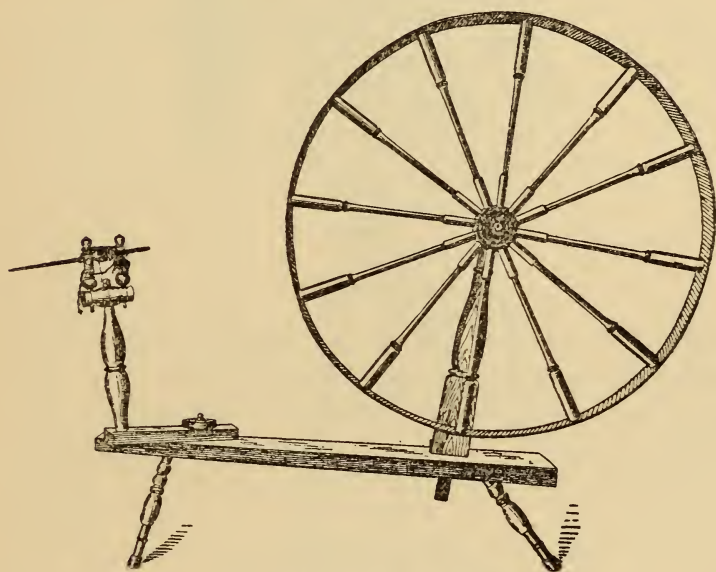
THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



THE LIVEZEY HOUSE.

ON THE EAST BANK OF THE WISSAHICKON, AT LIVEZEY'S LANE.

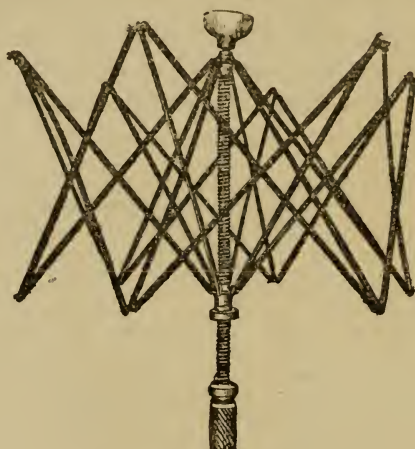
charity to the poor, and the needy. They have been a positive factor in laying the social foundations of domestic happiness. Mutual helpfulness and hospitality builds a great social bulwark, a defence against poverty and wretchedness. Their simplicity of life is a fundamental principle in their faith, and was at once one of the most effectual means to self-support; and their simplicity and habits of economy have ever been a sure foundation for material advancement and a serviceable competency. True to their



WOLL-RAD OR ZWIRN-RAD.

faith and doctrines, the Brethren must ever be kind friends and good neighbors, and suffer wrong if need be from their neighbors and associates that they may gain them or retain them as friends, rather than redress the wrong by process of law and so make them their enemies. But

aside from their religious, social and civil characteristics, the Brethren led an intensely active industrial life. In the rural districts they were first of all engaged in agricultural pursuits, and a majority of the members of the

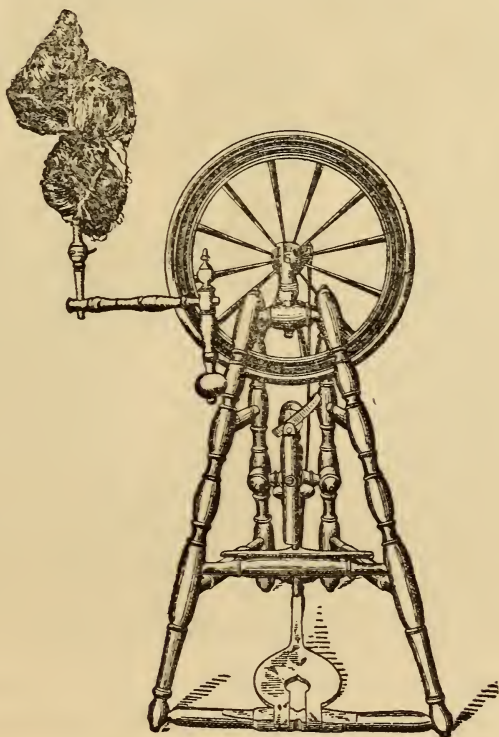


FADEN-HASPEL.

Brethren church of to-day are still largely interested in the various departments of agricultural industries.

In the township of Germantown and other parts of Philadelphia county adjacent to the settlement of Philadelphia, the Brethren were early engaged in a variety of industries, and helped to lay the foundations of many important manufacturing industries for which Philadelphia became noted from time to time. It is interesting to look over the old deeds and study the long and varied list of occupations, indicating the industrial activity. Elder Peter Becker was a master weaver, and early contributed his share toward making Germantown what it has been for almost two centuries, a center for weaving and knitting industries. With each succeeding generation, the mills have become larger,

the looms and machinery more perfect, and the business more complex and extensive. Alexander Mack, Jr., followed in the same line of work, besides his very extensive work in the church; and for his day and times, he had a large manufacturing establishment, with a variety of



UPRIGHT SPINNING WHEEL.

products ranging from knitting stockings to weaving blankets. The Saur's became printers, bookbinders and book publishers, and the family has continued in the publishing business for a century and a half. The Leiberts were printers and publishers for several generations, and pub-



lished some of the earliest hymn-books the Brethren had. Some of the Schreibers were bookbinders.

Additional reference will be made to literary and publishing interests in the sketch on Germantown, in the



"ENGRAVED COPPER PLATE OF DIRCK KEYSER."

chapter that follows. The Keyzers were tanners, and for several generations had an important business. There were tailors and twiners and shoemakers and many others.

Then there were masons, and there were carpenters, and there were plasterers, and other like occupations. These suggestions which I have made indicate the life of the Brethren in an industrial sense, both in the rural districts and also in and around Germantown and Philadelphia. To be sure there were also merchants and dealers of various kinds, as circumstances demanded the development of such business. But before leaving this industrial life, I must say that it was not always exclusively agriculture in the country or rural district. There were many instances where there was a combination of country and town, or of farming and manufacturing, a combination of industries. I can best illustrate by describing an actual example to indicate this type of industrial life and activity.

In order to make the illustration understood, it is necessary to give some detail of the history of this actual family. It is necessary to refer to different epochs, in order to show the development of the family as well as the industry, or I should rather say the industries. I will say, however, that the family when complete, consisted of father and mother, and seven sturdy sons and six daughters; and there seemed to be nothing especially unlucky about the number thirteen in this case. Early in life, the family lived on a small place and life was begun without means. In the summer time the father tilled the few acres, with such help as his growing children could give him; besides he assisted his neighbors at busy times. In winter time he made shoes for his neighbors and friends, going from house to house, and remaining at each home long enough to meet the demands of the family. Meanwhile in these early years, spinning and weaving was also commenced. The family was taught that self-help was the first step towards self-support. The house on the little

homestead was not very spacious, and was entirely without plaster upstairs. The older children were girls, and had now grown well towards womanhood, and we shall notice how they found a way to plaster the second story of the home. The father had given the land for a new church close by, and when the church was completed it was found that there was considerable mortar left. The young ladies proposed that if the father would secure the mortar, they would see to it that the upstairs would get plastered. He secured the mortar and they did the plastering. These are a few indications of the earlier family life. The scene has changed, and years have passed. The father has years ago been elected a minister in the Brethren church, and has devoted much time to study and self-improvement in order to meet the demands of circumstances. He has commenced the study of medicine, under the direction of two able physicians in the nearby county-seat. He has also commenced to settle estates, write agreements, wills, deeds, and other legal papers. The family has moved some miles away from their former home on a farm of two hundred and thirty acres. Here there was new life and increased activity. Agriculture was carried on on a much larger scale. There was plenty of opportunity for ambitious robust young women to make themselves useful, as well as to make some money. I take pleasure in quoting here from the words of one of the girls who took part in these activities: "The place was the scene of active busy life. The girls were toiling in the fields day after day during the summer months. Corn had to be planted with hoes; the grain was cut with sickles. The women made their hand and received as much per day as the men, —fifty cents during harvest for cutting grain with sickles, twenty-five cents for corn-planting and hay-making, except



the men received fifty cents per day for mowing with the scythe." She further says: "When the summer work was over, the girls found plenty of work in the house at the spinning-wheels. In our family, three spinning-wheels were kept running from about four weeks before Christmas until about the middle of March. These were kept going from four o'clock in the morning until nine in the evening." It may be noted in passing that five or six girls could keep the wheels going by relieving each other from time to time. Here is an argument in favor of the wheel. These girls went "wheeling" early, and what robust girls they became! But let us continue the study of the industrial life. She continues: "There were three looms kept running also, one of which was usually run by one of the girls." It should be noted that the father, soon after coming to the large farm, made ample provision for the large family as well as the increasing manufacturing plant and industrial establishment. He built a large addition to the farmhouse, and in this addition there was a room, about 40 feet long by 30 feet wide, which was for the accommodation of the looms and other machinery. By removing the looms, this room became an assembly room with ample accommodation for preaching services several times a year. Her story grows in interest as she proceeds. She says: "We manufactured flannels, towels, coverlets, etc." "In the basement, underneath the big room, mother did the coloring of the yarns, etc. There was the walled-in kettle to color blue. This kettle was used exclusively to color blue—while other kettles were used for various other colors. Everybody made his own yarn in those days. Then the people brought it to the shops and had it manufactured into goods."

This description of one who took part is brief, but it



gives us a vivid picture of the busy scenes around the family hearthstone. Such energy and activity and enterprise of long ago, would even do credit to a present-day family with modern opportunities and better advantages. But I have omitted a part of the industry. Nearby was a milling plant, run by water power, where plaster of Paris was ground, as well as flax-seed. After the oil was pressed out by crude machinery, the oil-meal was sold to the neighbors for feed for the cattle. This milling plant was later turned into a carding and weaving establishment and, later still, into a grist and flour mill. All in all this family was a marvel of industrial activity; and yet it is a true example of a true type, of which there were many constituents. The Brethren church has been singularly blessed with many such intelligent, energetic, industrious families. The father, who was the head and soul of all this industry, must have been a busy man; and yet this was the least important as a factor in his busy life. As a physician, he had a large practice, and that for many years. He was eminently successful as a practitioner. In drawing up legal papers and transacting legal business, his work was never called into question by any lawyer or judge. As a minister, he traveled far and wide, and preached much. He was for many years a Bishop. As deacon and minister and Bishop, he served the Brethren church for forty-nine years. I hope this chapter, though brief in its scope, may to some extent illustrate the industrial life of the early members of the Brethren church, and that it may prove of interest to its readers.



THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



PHOTO. BY J. F. SACHSE, APRIL, 1899.

MEETING HOUSE OF THE BRETHREN, GERMANTOWN.

OLD MEETING HOUSE BUILT 1770.

NEW CHURCH DEDICATED MAY, 1897.



BRETHREN CHURCH AND PARSONAGE, GERMANTOWN.

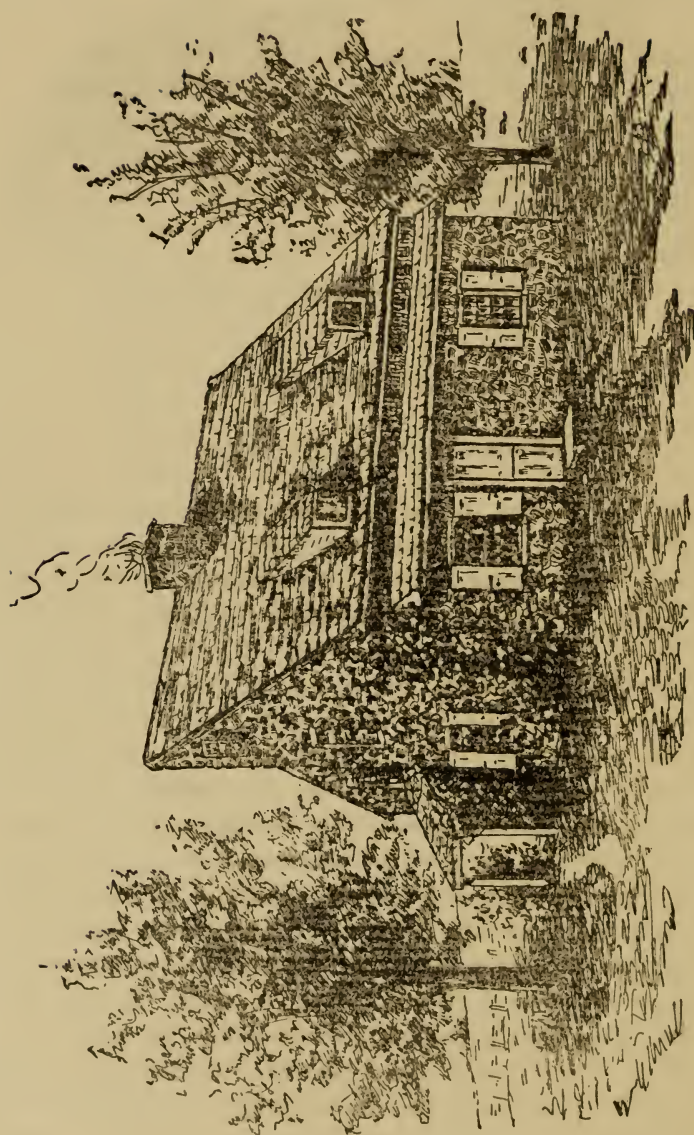
## CHAPTER XII.

### THE MOTHER CHURCH AT GERMANTOWN.



T seems to me eminently proper that even in this short sketch of the "History of the Brethren Church," there should be one chapter especially devoted to the Mother Congregation at Germantown. The name of Germantown has a universal charm and interest to all those who have any knowledge of or taste for the historical accounts of the settlement of Pennsylvania. Many historians have delighted themselves, in the true spirit of investigation, to make extensive research in order to confirm the important facts of the settlement of Germantown, and present the many interesting phases of its more than two hundred years of history. Others have contented themselves with garbling from the general legendary accounts of common folk-lore, or have joined the general squabble of arguing on controverted points of minor importance. Dr. Oswald Seidensticker, who died a few years ago, has written most interestingly on his profound investigations of early German life in America. Mr.





PARSONAGE OF THE BRETHREN CHURCH. BUILT 1756.  
6611 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia.

Julius F. Sachse, in his *German Pietists* and other historic studies, has written in a most interesting manner of different phases of Germantown history. By far the most learned and exhaustive treatise on the *Settlement of Germantown* ever written, was that by Hon. Samuel W. Pennypacker as published in the *Pennsylvania-German Society's Annual* of 1898. The Judge has spent years in the most profound research of all historical matter of many countries and languages, that would throw any light on the beginning of German emigration and the settlement of Germantown in 1683. As the history of this old town is interesting, so also is the history of the mother congregation that has been in existence here for one hundred and seventy-seven years. There is a large amount of historical matter bearing on the Germantown church, directly or indirectly; but it has become much scattered years ago by careless or unfaithful custodians, and much of it being now in the hands of private individuals, it is difficult to collect and confirm the necessary facts for a much-needed reliable account.

There is still a wealth of good material, and of sufficient magnitude, to make a large volume of history; but he who will write the "History of the Brethren Church of Germantown," to be worthy of his subject, must be diligent and energetic in his researches, and must be withal a thoughtful and painstaking student. There is considerable material lying on the surface, as is always the case, that passes current as history, and yet is entirely worthless to the reliable historian until confirmed by careful study and research. It would seem that in this respect Germantown has been singularly unfortunate in its experience of being at the mercy of the unscrupulous historian.

In the scope of this chapter I cannot devote any space

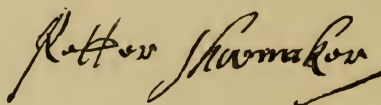
in useless arguments in trying to settle controverted points ; but I shall confine myself largely to the presentation of the two following lines of thought :

1. I shall present some studies in original research, which may correct some misstatements of would-be historians ; and,

2. I shall aim to record some important facts and events, that are unrecorded at present, or else too briefly recorded to be intelligent. I regret very much that I cannot devote a liberal space to biographies of the prominent men that have made the history of the Germantown church what it is—so full of earnest Christian devotion and noble deeds in the spirit of self-sacrifice.

#### HISTORY OF THE PRESENT LOCATION OF THE CONGREGATION.

It will be manifestly of interest to know something of the history of the ground where the congregation is at present located, and when and how possession was secured. But it is necessary to give the facts in regard to this matter, for the additional reason that there have been some false and misleading statements made regarding the history. These statements are copied again and again, apparently without any attempt being made to know the facts, when

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Peter Schilbert". The script is cursive and fluid, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

the records of the office of the Recorder of Deeds are at all times accessible to all who care to investigate. The usual reference is made that Johannes Pettikoffer received the ground as a gift, from one Peter Schilbert ; and

then some add that Schilbert had much difficulty in gaining possession of the land again, when Pettikoffer went to Ephrata, as he did in 1739. Now all this is sheer nonsense, and is the absolute creation of somebody's fancy. The evidence of ownership will be presented in each case in regular order. It will be sufficient for the present study to begin with the ownership of Peter Shoemaker. I have before me the original parchment papers,<sup>1</sup> consisting of the lease for one year, and the deed issued the next day, which indicates the transfer from Shoemaker to Pettikoffer. This lease is a strip of real parchment thirty and a half inches long and four and a half inches wide. The deed is twenty-three and a half inches long and eleven and a half inches wide. I quote from the deed as follows: "THIS INDENTURE made the fourth day of August In the year of our Lord One-thousand seven-hundred and thirty-one BETWEEN Peter Shoemaker of Germantown in the county of Philadelphia in the province of Pensilvania, Turner, & Margret his wife of the one part And Johane Pettenkoven [Johannes Pettikoffer] of Germantown aforesd Stocking-knitter of the other part WITNESSETH that thesd Peter Shoemaker & Margret his wife for & in consideration of the sum of five Pounds & five shillings lawful money of Pensilvania to them in hand paid by thesd Johanes Pettenkoven The receipt whereof they do hereby acknowledge & thereof do fully acquit & forever discharge thesd Johanes Pettenkoven his heirs & assigns by these presents HAVE Granted Bargained Sold Aliened Enfeoffed Released & Confirmed And by these present DO Grant Bargain Sell Alien Enfeoff Release & Confirm unto thesd Johanes Pettenkoven (In his actual possession now being by Vertue of one Indenture of Bargain & Sale to him thereof made by

---

<sup>1</sup> The property of the Brethren church.

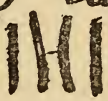


them thesd Peter Shoemaker & Margret his wife for one whole year bearing Date the day before the date hereof & by force of the Statute made for transfering uses into possession) And to his heirs & assigns A CERTAIN Piece parcel of Land Situate lying & being in the Adjacent side-land of thesd Germantown Beginning at a stone by the North East Side of the high way leading from thesd Germantown to North Wales being also a Corner of Johanes Mock's land thence by the Same & other land North East forty perches to a post set for a Corner thence North West two perches Eight foot & three inches to a post set for a Corner thence by thesd Peter Shoemaker his land South West forty Perches to a stone set for a Corner by thesd highway & by thesd Highway South fifteen degrees East two perches Eight foot & five inches to the place of Beginning Containing a Half acre & twenty perches of land TOGETHER with all & singular the buildings Woods Underwoods Meadows Ways Waters Watercouses fishings fowlings hawkings huntings Rights Liberties priveledges Improvements Hereditaments & appurtenances whatsoever thereunto belonging or in any wise appertaining And the Reversions & Remainders Rents Issues & profits thereof TO HAVE AND TO HOLD thesd Piece or parcel of Land Hereditaments & premises hereby granted & Released or Mentioned so to be with their appurtenances unto thesd Johanes Pettenkoven his heirs and assigns TO the only proper use & behoof of him thesd Johanes Pettenkoven his heirs & assigns forever."

Then follows the usual condition of the "yearly rent of a half-penny"; the usual "warrant"; and after that the declaration of rightful ownership, to show the right to transfer. I have quoted about one-third, so much indi-

cates the usual amount of specific detail and legal wordiness.

Signed by

*Peter Shoemaker*  
*Margaret*  *Shoemaker*  
*mark*

Witnessed by  
Henry Pastorius.

On the reverse side of the deed, is the receipt in which Shoemaker acknowledges having received of Pettikoffer the full amount of five pounds and five shillings as the purchase money mentioned within. It will be seen by the claim of this deed, that Pettikoffer paid a fair price for his half acre, considering that it was nearly half a mile out of the settlement of Germantown as it then was, and that altogether the settlement had not more than twenty houses. He paid at the rate of ten pounds, or fifty dollars, per acre, entirely unimproved. These original papers should be sufficient testimony to prove that Johannes Pettikoffer did, on August 4, 1731, acquire title to his half acre from Peter Shoemaker. But to the unscrupulous historian, it does not make much difference whether he says Peter Schilbert or Peter Shoemaker.

This strip of ground now described as forty rods long and two rods and eight feet wide is the north half of the present church property, or the part on which the church buildings are located. The year preceding, or 1730, Peter Shoemaker sold to Johannes Mack, located immedi-

ately to the south of this, a strip twenty-one perches long and four perches wide, also a half acre, at two pounds and ten shillings. A part of this strip now forms the south

*Johannes Mack*

half of the church property, or the part on which the parsonage is located. It will be noticed by the foregoing that Mack paid just half as much for his half acre, as Pettikoffer did for his half.

*John Gorgas*

The deed is signed as follows :

*Johannes Gorgas*

*her*

*Ann Elizabeth Gorgas*  
*Mark*

Witnesses {	John Gorgas,
	his
	Henry X Fridrick,
	mark
	Richard Robb.

On the twenty-second day of August, 1739, Johannes Pettikoffer and Ann Elizabeth, his wife, sold the half acre,

THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



J. F. SACHSE, PHILA.

ANCIENT SEALS ON DEEDS  
AND DOCUMENTS OF THE GERMANTOWN CHURCH.



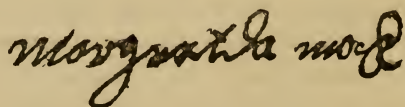


together with the house he had built upon it, to Johannes Mack and Andreas Bonney, for the sum of sixty-five pounds, each of the two holding a half interest. This house was built in 1732, and because of its importance in later years, we shall give some description of its interesting history and notice it hereafter as the "Pettikoffer House." It will be noticed, that whereas he had paid for the ground five pounds and five shillings, he now receives on his sale sixty-five pounds, thus valuing his improvements at fifty-nine pounds and fifteen shillings.

It thus appears that there is no documentary evidence to sustain the old fable that Pettikoffer received the lot as a gift and then begged the money to build the house.

Because of the importance of several statements, I quote at some length from the following deed: "THIS INDENTURE made the twentyeth day of July in the year of our Lord one-thousand seven hundred and forty-two BETWEEN John Mack of Germantown and the county of Philadelphia, Stocking-weaver, and Margrett his wife of the one part and Peter Shilbert of Germantown aforesaid yeoman of the other part WHEREAS an Indenture made the twenty-second day of August one-thousand seven-hundred thirty-nine between Johannes Petenkoven of Germantown aforesaid stocking-knitter and Ann Elizabeth his wife of the one part and the said John Mack and one Andreas Bonney of the other part the said Johannes Petenkoven and Ann Elizabeth his wife for the consideration therein mentioned did grant release and confirm unto the said John Mack and Andreas Bonney A CERTAIN messuage or tenement and piece or parcel of land thereunto belonging situate in the adjacent Side Land of Germantown aforesaid containing by Computation half an Acre and twenty perches of Land to hold the one full equal and undivided

moiety thereof unto the said John Mack his heirs and Assigns forever and to hold the other full equal and undivided moiety thereof unto the said Andreas Bonney his heirs and assigns forever Under the yearly Rent of one half penny lawful money of Pennsylvania payable to Peter Shoemaker his heirs and assigns As in and by the said recited Indenture Relation thereunto had appears AND WHEREAS the said Andreas Bonney did make his last will and Testament in writing bearing Date on or about the sixth Day of October one-thousand seven-hundred forty-one and therein and thereby devised in these words or to the Effect following viz. : ‘ And I leave unto the said John Mack and to his heirs forever the house and lot whereon I now dwell (being the same Messuage) for the consideration of twenty-nine pounds ten shillings money of Pennsylvania with full power to keep or sell the same at his pleasure and if the same John Mack should sell the same house and lot to any person or persons I give him full power and authority to sign seal and deliver deed or deeds of sale to the purchaser for the same according to law’ as in and by the same last will and Testament duly proved and entered in the Register General’s Office at Philadelphia Relation thereunto had appears NOW THIS INDENTURE WITNESSETH that the said John Mack and Margrett his wife for and in consideration of the sum



of seventy-three pounds lawful money of Pennsylvania to them in hand paid by the said Peter Shilbert HAVE granted bargained sold released and confirmed and by these presents do grant bargain sell release and confirm

unto the said Peter Shilbert.....and to his heirs and Assigns, etc.”

This deed also declares the sale of a small triangle that is required to give a half interest in the well of water on the south side. The deed is signed by John Mack and his wife, and Richard Robb is the witness to the transaction.

There are several points of interest in regard to valuation and occupancy that might be noted in this connection. While Pettikoffer had paid five pounds and five shillings for the half acre lot without improvements, he sold the same lot with the house he had built for the sum of sixty-five pounds in 1739. It will be noticed that Bonney willed his half to Mack in 1741, twenty-nine pounds and ten shillings, or at the rate of fifty-nine pounds for the entire property, which was just fifteen shillings less than the difference between Pettikoffer's buying and selling price, or the value of the house alone. It will be noticed further that Mack sold to Shilbert for the consideration of seventy-three pounds, which was a considerable advance, but which included a half interest in the well. This deed is interesting in the next place because it tells us who occupied the house after Pettikoffer left it in 1739. It seems that when Pettikoffer sold and moved to Ephrata, Bonney took possession of the newly acquired premises in which he had half interest, or at any rate we find him in possession October 6, 1741, when he made his will, for he says, “the house and lot whereon I now dwell (being the same messuage).” Thus, instead of Shilbert being the original owner and giving this lot to Pettikoffer, as some accounts say, the ownership, as we have clearly proved, runs as follows: Peter Shoemaker, Johannes Pettikoffer, John Mack and Andrew Bonney, John Mack, Peter Shilbert; and all these changes in the eleven years from 1731 to 1742.



It seems to have been the intention of Peter Shilbert to present this half acre to the Brethren congregation, but he died with the property legally in his possession. After some years of delay, this was finally accomplished, as will be seen by the quotation that follows. This deed was issued on the eleventh day of August, 1760. After tracing the ownership from Shoemaker to Shilbert, and giving a description of the half acre, and also of two small triangles, the deed continues with the following recital: "AND WHEREAS The said Peter Shilbert dying (in effect) Intestate Possessed of the said Messuage and three pieces of Land & premises (He having Made only a Non-cupative Will) The Right of the inheritance of his Said Possessions Depending Legally unto Johanna Hoech the wife of Bastian Hoech which Johanna being the only Issue and Heir of Abraham Shilbert who was the Brother and Heir at Law of the Said Peter Shilbert AND the said Bastian Hoech and Johanna his wife in and by a Certain Deed Roll or writing under their Hands and Seals bearing date the Twenty sixth day of August Ao: Di: 1746 did for the consideration therein Mentioned (among other lands of which the said Peter Shilbert died Possessed of) grant and Convey the said Messuage and three pieces of Land (by the name of the little place and House near Germantown) unto the said Theobold Endt and Hennerly Slingloff in ffee NOW THIS INDENTURE WITNESSETH That the said Theobald Endt and Henery Slingloff For and in Consideration of the sum of Ten Pound Lawfull money of Pennsylvania to them in hand paid by the said Alexander Mack Christopher Sower Peter Libert and George Schriber the Receipt whereof is hereby Acknowledged HAVE granted bargained Sol Released and Confirmed and by these presents DO grant bargain sell Release and

Confirm unto the said Alexander Mack Christopher Sower Peter Libert and George Schriber and to their Heirs and assigns the said Messuage and above described three peices or parcels of Land thereunto belonging, etc.” The deed closes with usual provision for paying the yearly half penny rent and the proper Warrant, and Theobald Endt and Henry Slingloff dispose of the property which they had held for the term of fourteen years.

It is not difficult to see now what was the intention, when it is noted that the four men to whom the property was deeded, were four of the principal men of the Brethren congregation. These four men were simply four trustees, to hold the property “in trust”; and on the day following, they published a Declaration of Trust. In the opening part of this Declaration, Alexander Mack, Christopher Sower, Peter Libert and George Schriber, formally acknowledge having received the property from Theobald Endt and Henry Slingloff; and then the important document continues as follows: “NOW KNOW YE that the said Alexander Mack, Christopher Sower, Peter Libert and George Schriber do hereby acknowledge and declare that the said Messuage or Tenement and three peices of Land or ground was so as aforesaid granted unto them in Trust nevertheless by the direction and at the appointment of the persons who are members of the Religious Society or Community of the people called Dutch (German) Baptists and belonging to the Meeting of that People in or near Germantown aforsd To the intent only that they the said Alexander Mack, Christopher Sower, Peter Libert and George Schriber and such or so many of them as Shall be and continue in Unity and Religious Fellowship with the Said People and remain members of said Meeting whereunto they do now belong Shall stand and

be Seized of the said Messuage or Tenement three peices or parcels of Land or ground & premises So Conveyed to them as before recited To the use and intents hereinafter Mentioned and declared and under the Conditions & Restrictions hereinafter limited & Restricted and to no other use or purpose whatsoever, That is to say, One Room in the said Messuage to be made use of for a Meeting place of the said People living at or near Germantown aforesaid and for such other as the said Community may think proper to admit thereto The which Room May be improved or enlarged for the better convenience of the said Meeting at the discretion of the said Community in such Manner as they may think Meet AND one Room and kitchen of the sade Messuage to be made use of for a dwelling place for some Widow woman of the Said Society or Community to live in Rent free and that the said Society or Community Shall & do keep the said Messuage or Tenement & peices or parcels of Land or ground in repair from time to time Towards the Charge of which they are to have the use Rents Issues & Profits which may accrue or arise yearly from the remaining part of the premises PROVIDED always nevertheless that if it should so happen that a Regular Society & Community of the said People Should cease to be kept up at & near German-town and that they should decline holding up their Said Meeting That then and in such case it Shall & may be Lawfull for the said Alexander Mack Christopher Sower Peter Libert and George Schriber or the Survivors or Survivor of them in the said Trust To sell and Dispose of the said Messuage or Tenement three pieces or parcels of Land or ground & premises and to make & execute a ffee Simple Deed of Conveyance for the Same to the purchaser And the money arising by Such Sale to Distribute (chiefly

or mostly) to & amongst the Poor belonging to the said Society in or near Germantown aforesd (not exempting the poor of other Societies from Some part thereof) and to be assisted in Making the said Distribution by & with the advice & consent of the Elders & other Discreet persons of the Same Society holding Community and keeping a regular Meeting at the next or nearest place to Germantown aforesaid To which Meeting the accounts of such Distribution Shall be made & Submitted PROVIDED also that neither the said Alexander Mack Christopher Sower Peter Libert & George Schriber nor any of them Nor any person or persons Succeeding them in this Trust Who Shall be declared by the Members of the Said Society for the time being to be our of unity or Church fellowship with them Shall be capable to execute this Trust or stand seized thereof to the uses aforesaid Nor have any Right or Interest in the premises or any part thereof whilst they or any of them Shall So remain BUT that in all such cases as also when any of them or others Succeeding them in the Trust aforesaid Shall happen to Depart this life Then it Shall & may be Lawfull to and for the said Members as often as occasion Shall require to make choice of others to Mannage the said Trust and to execute the Same instead of those or Such as Shall so fall away and be out of unity with the said People called Dutch (German) Baptists or depart this life, etc." The Declaration further contains the provision that the said Trustees shall assign their Trust to other Trustees whenever asked to do so by the congregation; and also contains the acknowledgment that they act simply as Trustees and in no other capacity whatsoever.

The Pettikoffer house is getting interesting in its history. By the above quotation it is clearly set forth that one room of the Pettikoffer house was duly set apart and devoted



conditions & Restrictions above expressed and to and for me  
and seals This Twelfth day of August in the Year

Peter Leibert



Alexander Mack-

Georg Schreiber



Christopher Sauer

SIGNATURES TO THE DECLARATION OF TRUST.

by the congregation of the Brethren for religious worship ; and we know from many proofs that they so continued to worship in the said house until July 8, 1770, when their new meeting-house was dedicated, or for a period of ten years. It is altogether likely, however, that during the period of holding services from house to house, meetings were frequently held in the Pettikoffer house, as well as others in the immediate vicinity. For we do know that prior to the year 1760, a number of members had settled in the neighborhood.

#### THE OLD FOLKS' HOME.

While the said Declaration of Trust tells us of the regular and permanent meeting-place, it also tells in a very interesting manner how one room and the kitchen were set apart for some widow to dwell "rent free"; thus showing how early the Brethren thought of making special provision and providing a home for the "widows and fatherless." I know of no instance where any other denomination made a similar public provision for its widowed poor, at so early a date. The history of this Home is interesting. While it is probably true that in a few years the congregation so increased that perhaps the entire house was needed for purposes of worship, we do know that when the new stone meeting-house was dedicated in 1770, the Pettikoffer house was set apart anew for the comfort of the widows, and it remained such a home until 1861, or a period of 101 years from the time it was first set apart. There are many people living to-day who remember the place well as the "Widows' Home." I am indebted to Charles M. Benson, of Germantown, and also Rachel Douglass Wise, of Philadelphia, for facts that enable me to describe the Pettikoffer house as it appeared fifty years ago. The main

part of the house was about twenty feet long by sixteen feet wide, built of logs, with frame gables, and shingle roof. The house fronted south, with gables east and west. The spaces between the logs were chinked and plastered, and the entire house whitewashed. It had a good cellar, with an outside trapdoor, which was located between the pavement and the outside door leading into the east room. There were four windows and one outside door. There were two windows in the west gable towards

*Alfred Ziegen  
Gustav Sauer*

the street, one upstairs and one downstairs. Then there were two additional windows in the west room, one on the north and one on the south side. There were two rooms upstairs and two rooms downstairs. At the east end of the east room, there was a large fireplace which was in constant use from 1852 until the time the house was taken down in December, 1861, so my informer tells me. The meeting-room was the west one, well lighted with three windows. The ceilings were of good height. The house was still in good condition in 1861, when it was torn down, after such an interesting history of one hundred and thirty years.

Immediately to the rear of the above-described house there stood many years ago a good-sized frame building, whose history I have not been able to unravel. Many suggestions have been made of its probable history, but I have been unable to confirm anything so that I can safely regard it as history. I hope the future may yet reveal the purpose of this ancient structure.

## THE OLD CHURCH.



N this same half acre that we have been considering, or the northern half of the church grounds, are located the church buildings, consisting of the old, which was built, as stated before, in the year 1770, and the new, built in 1896-1897. It is interesting to note the completeness of this old building, considering the time at which it was built. Not only was it complete in its appointment, but it was substantially built, as may be noted from the fact that it is still standing and from the additional fact that it is still doing good service and in most excellent state of preservation. It is thirty feet square, built of stone; the walls are eighteen inches thick. There was a large well-appointed basement, under the entire building, of good height, where there was a large fireplace for cooking and making the necessary preparation for lovefeast occasions. In the corner, near the fireplace, is a large flat stone built into the wall. This stone was hollowed out trough-like, and on it the waste water was poured to drain out of the building. The floor in the audience-room is characteristic and interesting. It is yellow pine, very hard and full of pitch. The boards were carefully selected, almost every board has a heart in it, consequently there are no sap boards, and there has been no decay in all these years. But there is another reason why the floor boards are neither decayed nor worm-eaten. The floor rests on a bed of mortar, which is supported by a layer of split oak lath. The distinguishing mark of the hand-made nails (long narrow heads), is visible in every board. About twenty-five years ago, the audience-room was remodeled, the windows were arched, the ceiling was raised and new seats put in.



Formerly the ceiling was about eight feet high, plastered and whitewashed; and a heavy wooden girder, supported by two posts, was visible. There was a large loft, very roomy and well-lighted, supplied by four windows, two in either gable. It seems to have been built and arranged for some special purpose, perhaps largely unknown at this time. There was an outside entrance to this loft, making access easy, and without disturbing in any way, or entering, the audience-room. Many years ago, this front gable was rough-cast, covering up all traces of this loft-door and windows, and all knowledge of them seems to have been lost until three years ago when we restored this front. Upon removing the rough-cast, there were the distinct outlines of the door and windows visible. At this time I made the following measurements: The door was four feet, three inches wide and six feet, six inches high, a very large door, if it was a single door. The windows were three feet, two inches wide and four feet, six inches high. This loft seems to have been extensively used for storing the unbound sheets of publications that required months to run through the press. It is said that Christopher Sower so occupied the place, with his third edition of the Bible, in 1777, and that the unbound sheets were confiscated by the British soldiers, and used for gun-wads and for bedding their cavalry horses. The old meeting-house is still in constant use—being open on Sunday, for the Sunday-school services, and on Thursday evenings, for the prayer-meeting. The council and business meetings are also held here.

The south half of the church grounds needs to have a brief account in this connection. The church came into possession of this portion many years after acquiring title to the north half. It was noted in the early part of this chapter that this part was purchased from Peter Shoe-

maker in 1730 by Johannes Mack. On the twenty-ninth day of August, 1751, Johannes Mack and Margaretha, his wife, sold the same to Christopher Sower, and we are informed that the place consisted of "two Messuages or Tenements and seventy-eight perches of ground." On the twenty-fourth day of September, 1753, Christopher

*Christopher Sower junr.*

Sower and Catharina, his wife, sold the same to Philip Weaver, for the sum of sixty pounds. On the eighteenth day of March, 1796, John Weaver, Philip Weaver and Susanna Keyser, three children and heirs of the above Philip Weaver, deeded the property to Abraham Keyser, for the sum of four hundred pounds; and on the following day, the said Abraham Keyser deeded the same, for the same amount, to Philip Weaver, one of the sons and heirs

*Catharina Sanorin*

of the first above mentioned Philip Weaver. On the fourth day of April, 1804, Philip Weaver and his wife, Ann, sold the same to the Trustees of the Brethren congregation, for the consideration of four hundred and thirty pounds. On it was located the present parsonage, which the first Philip Weaver erected as his dwelling in 1756.

## THE WEAVER LOG-HOUSE.



IMMEDIATELY to the rear of the parsonage there stood for many years an ancient-looking house, which was frequently known as the "Weaver Log-house," and which he had occupied before building his spacious stone house. But by whom it was built and when, is now an open question, for the deed of 1751 informs us there were then two houses. This log-house was an interesting old house, at any rate, and stood until January, 1871. It was built of logs, as intimated, and was covered with tile. The roof was high and very steep, and presented a very striking appearance. The building was about eighteen or twenty feet square, and had but one room upstairs, and one room down. There were no windows upstairs. There were two windows down, and there was one door. In the west part of the room there was a large bakeoven, with the opening from the outside. There were a large chimney and fireplace. In its latter years, this house did service only as a summer kitchen, but it was still in fair condition when it was removed, after serving at least five generations of the Weaver family.

## A SELECT SCHOOL.



THE parsonage just referred to is now one hundred and forty-four years old, and has been the property of the congregation for ninety-six years; and yet, strange to say, it was never occupied by the pastor or minister, until the present pastor occupied it seven years ago. Its history as a parsonage is therefore short and not very important, and yet memorable to a few people. Your humble servant will



THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



ANCIENT HOUSE OF JOHANNES MACK.

(ALSO KNOWN AS THE WEAVER AND TILE-ROOF HOUSE.)

FROM PHOTO ABOUT 1870.





look back with interest, and remember the cozy old stone house as the place where he wrote this sketch and where he prepared more than seven hundred and fifty sermons. The family can well look back to the place where seven enjoyable years were spent. To two people the place will be doubly interesting—two little people, five and two years old, Alexander Mack and Esther Eva. Some day they may be much interested in the fact that they were born in the old parsonage at Germantown. But the place has history and plenty of it; and many an aged person sitting in silent meditation in the closing years of their lives, and reviewing the years of their childhood, will remember with pleasure the school days spent in this old house. This school opened more than seventy-five years ago, continued for many years, and was presided over by a sweet-faced woman, a member of the congregation. The schoolroom was about fifteen by twenty-five feet, and had at times seventy scholars. The teacher was Susanna Douglass, and in addition to the regular school curriculum she taught sewing, knitting and fancy work. Her daughter, Rachel Douglass Wise, is still living in Philadelphia, at the age of eighty-eight years. Upon a certain occasion, the mother went to visit her sisters in Virginia, going by boat, as the only means of travel, and remained six weeks. During this time the daughter, Rachel, then fifteen years of age, taught the school. She used to rise at four o'clock in the morning to set the copy-books. Many, in their latter days, are delighted to see their schoolroom once more. This schoolroom is now occupied by the pastor's study and the dining-room.

These are a few short chapters of the unwritten history of the Germantown church, and there are others to be written.

## THE CEMETERY.



THE cemetery is a very interesting place. So far as grave-stones indicate, the first burial took place in 1797. Nearly all the old families of Germantown are represented, and in some cases many of the same family and several generations. In a few cases five and six generations are buried. Among the ministers buried here are the following: Alexander Mack, Sr., Alexander Mack, Jr., Peter Leibert, Peter Keyser, Christian Van Laushett, John Van Laushett, Jacob Spanogle, Christian Custer, John W. Price, Amos Cowell and others.

Among other noted persons buried here may be named Miss Harriet Livermore, in an unmarked grave; the woman who prayed in our National Congress in 1832, the "Evangelist," "The Guest" of Whittier's *Snow Bound*, the "Pilgrim Wanderer" in the Holy Land and in Egypt, the "Watcher" on Mt. Sinai in the immediate expectation of the coming of Christ. After she had wandered all over the world, her tired body was laid to rest in this beautiful God's acre, in the midst of these historic surroundings.

The cemetery is still much used as a burial place, and is an ideal little spot. Everything pertaining to it receives constant attention and care, and everything is in good condition.

## ALEXANDER MACK, JR.



HAVE briefly traced some outlines of the history of the Brethren congregation at Germantown, and have spoken of a few of the now historic surroundings. It is perhaps about as much as should be said in a sketch of this character. When a history of this congregation is written in

# THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN.



PHOTO, BY JULIUS F. SACHSE.

## IN THE DUNKER GRAVEYARD AT GERMANTOWN.

GRAVE OF ALEXANDER MACK,  
(BROTHER THEOPHILUS)

GRAVE OF ALEXANDER MACK THE PATRIARCH,  
SHOWING OLD AND NEW GRAVESTONES.





full, much space needs to be devoted to Alexander Mack, Jr., and I think I cannot close this part without a few state-

## Alexander Mack

ments. It will be remembered that in the Koch excitement and exodus in 1739, he went to Ephrata. In the course of a few years, however, he returned to Germantown and was destined to become his father's eminent successor. He was probably elected to the ministry in 1748; and in 1749 he was ordained Bishop of the Germantown congregation. It is strange that the work of this man is so little known. He was a man of great energy and far-reaching influence. He was the most eminent man, beyond doubt, that the Brethren church has ever had in America, considering the times and circumstances of his eventful life. He was an able man as a preacher and counselor in church work. He was well known and greatly beloved all over the church. He was a gifted hymn-writer, and wrote much in defense of the church doctrines. For more than half a century, he served the church ably and faithfully. His work in organizing congregations and ordaining elders was very extensive. His life was a great blessing to many and was full of good deeds. He died at the ripe age of 91 years, 1 month and 20 days.

Some of the baptisms performed by Alexander Mack, Jr., at Germantown, after the year 1766:

1766.—May 15, Margretta Hartzbach.

“ October 3, Nathaniel Schrieber.

“ October 17, Henry Schlingluft, Jr., Catharine Schlingluft, Dorothea Fox.

- 1767.—July 12, Charles Lang.  
 “ August 7, Anna B. Van Lashett and Elizabeth Schlingluff.  
 “ August 16, Jacob Bauman and Maria Barbara, his wife.  
 “ October 2, Conrad Good, William Spira and Maria Spira.  
 1768.—March 27, Christina Schlungluff, Jr.  
 “ September 25, Hannah Stamm.  
 1769.—May 14, Sarah Baker.  
 “ July 27, Christopher Saur, Jr.  
 “ September 3, Michael Keyser, Sarah Mack and Susanna Baker.  
 “ October 5, Peter Keyser and Hannah, his wife, Henry Sharpnack and Sarah, his wife, John Schlingluff, Conrad Stamm, Maria Fendt, Elizabeth Raab.  
 1770.—September 2, John Weber, William Leibert, Dirock Keyser and Rachel, his wife.  
 “ September 30, Julius Roberly and Appolonia, his wife.  
 1771.—May 19, Thomas Langstroth and Catherine, his wife, Hannah Mack, Hannah Stier.  
 “ September 8, John Kaempfer.  
 “ November 10, Rudolph Harley and Barbara, his wife, John Harley and Margaretta, his wife, Ulrick Stouffer and Hannah, his wife.  
 1772.—April 19, Michael Corbit, Garehart Clemens and Gertrude, his wife, Jacob Landis and Maria, his wife.  
 1773.—January 4, John Prisz.  
 “ January 20, Phillipina Vernon.  
 1774.—March 27, Edmund Langstroth.  
 “ May 12, Edward Bright and Elizabeth, his wife, Elizabeth Painter, Ruth Silence.  
 “ July 3, Cornelius Neisz, William Heisler, David Meredith, Jacob Raab, George Duke, John Leibert, Anna Leibert, Susanna Hinckle, Hannah Knorr, Lydia Keyser, Catherine Bauman.

1774.—October 16, William Prisz and Susanna Knorr.

Here occurs a break in the records for the period of nine years.

1783.—October 20, Susanna Weaver, John Weaver's wife, and Catherine Keyser, Michael Keyser's wife.

1785.—March 6, Emanuel Fox and his wife, Margaret, Jacob Zigler and Lydia Kulp. I very much regret that I cannot present a complete list of his baptisms, but it has been impossible to confirm a part of the list. There is no complete record extant.

The following is a partial list of baptisms by Christopher Sower:

1748.—November 3, Elizabeth Weiss, Catherine Buchmarin, Susanna Miller.

1749.—April 2, Jacob Ganz.

1755.—May 18, Andrew Menichinger.

1758.—March 26, Uly Rinder and wife.

1781.—July 15, George Becker and his wife, Catherine, Nancy Becker, their daughter, Catherine, daughter of Frederick Stamm.

1783.—November 6, Adam Weber.

1784.—June 10, Martin Urner and wife, Barbara Baugh.

When Christopher was dead and Alexander Mack was past seventy-two years of age, the second Martin Urner baptized some at Germantown, and the following is perhaps a complete list:

1784.—August 15, Derick Keyser and his wife, Elizabeth, and Susanna Weaver, Philip Weaver's daughter.

1785.—September 25, Nicholas Oliver, Benjamin Lehman, and Peter Keyser, Jr.

1786.—September 14, Henry Rinker, William Keyser and his wife, Barbara, Elizabeth Lehman and Mary Heisler.

1788.—September 4, Charles Hubbs and his wife, Mary, Catherine Clemens and Hannah, the daughter of Derick Keyser.



MACK FAMILY.<sup>1</sup>

1st Gen.	Date of Birth.	Place.	Date of Marriage.	Date of Death.	Remarks.
Alexander	1679	Germany	1700	Germany	1735
	"		"	1720	Anna Margaretha Klingen.
2d Gen.					
John Valentine		"	(?) 1731	America	1755
		"	(?) 1731	"	8-11-1758 Maria Hildebrand Mack.
John		"		"	Sneider.
Alexander	1-28-1712	"	1- 1-1749	"	3-20-1803 Ordained, 1749. Edwards.
	9-25-1725		1- 1-1749		5- 6-1811 Elizabeth Nice Mack.
3d Gen.					
William	10-31-1741	"	10-13-1772	"	Blacksmith.
			10-13-1772		Agnes Gantz Mack.
Anna Maria	10-29-1752	"	6- 6-1769	"	4- 5-1770 Death in child-birth.
			6- 6-1769		Husband.
3 Sarah Marg.	12-23-1753	"	2- 2-1776	"	9- 8-1799 Baptized, 9-3-1769.
<i>Grandmother</i>	2-17-1753		2- 2-1776		1-23-1822 Husband, Jacob Zigler.
4 Hannah	9-10-1755	"	8-27-1775	"	4- 6-1816 Baptized, 5-19-1771.
	1-20-1756		8-27-1775		8-30-1815 Husband, Adam Weaver.
Alexander	1-18-1758	"		"	3-26-1760
Lydia	1- 4-1761	"	1779	"	Baptized, 3-6-1785.
			1779		12-14-1785 Husband, Dielman Kulp.
			7-15-1788		Husband, John Lentz, Baker.
7 Elizabeth	5- 2-1763	"		"	5-29-1770 Died of smallpox.
8 Anna Marg.	7-31-1765	"	8-22-1784	"	5-29-1838 Baptized, 3-6-1785.
	1764		8-22-1784		3- 2-1833 Baptized, 3-6-1785. Husband, Emanuel Fox.

<sup>1</sup> Three generations of Alexander Mack's family, the third being Alexander Mack, Jr.'s, children.*Annie Sanderling Zistel*



## APPENDIX.



THE brief sketch of the history of the Brethren church having been presented, it will be of interest to present a few subjects in the form of an Appendix, such as the main points in church doctrine, government, statistics, educational interests, missionary fields, etc.

### PART A. FAITH AND PRACTICE.

Elder D. L. Miller, editor of *The Gospel Messenger*, the principal church paper, has compiled a twelve-page pamphlet on "The Brethren," descriptive of "Faith and Practice," etc. This pamphlet is issued as tract No. 42, by the "General Missionary and Tract Committee," Elgin, Ill. I make the following abstracts :

#### INTRODUCTION.

"The Brethren are a large body of Christians, whose faith and practice are not generally known outside of their immediate localities. The errors in the books that attempt to describe the Brethren, as they call themselves, have been both numerous and lamentable. Starting with Buck's 'Theological Works' and ending with the ponderous encyclopedias and standard diction-

aries, error after error is found, and the faith and practice of the church have been greatly misrepresented. The statements that the Brethren are celibates, that they discourage marriage, that they do not marry outside of their own fraternity, that they keep the seventh day sabbath, that they live in communities, and other similar errors, set forth in the books, always have been without foundation. These misstatements, to be found in nearly all the standard works, show a lack of care, in obtaining correct information, that is far from commendable.

#### “FAITH AND PRACTICE.

“The Brethren hold the Bible to be the inspired and infallible Word of God, and accept the New Testament as their rule of faith and practice. In the subtleties of speculative theology the church takes but little interest. She is chiefly concerned in giving willing and cheerful obedience to the plain, simple commandments of Christ Jesus. The Brethren are, in every respect, evangelical in their faith. They believe in the Trinity, in the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, and in future rewards and punishments. Faith, repentance and baptism are held to be conditions of salvation. These three constitute true evangelical conversion, and upon them rests the promise of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

#### “BAPTISM.

“Baptism is administered by trine immersion. After being instructed in the principles of the Gospel, and having faithfully promised to observe the same, the applicant is taken down into the water, and, kneeling, reaffirms his faith in Christ and promises to live faithful until death. He is then baptized for the remission of his sins, into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the administrator immersing the applicant face forward at the mention of each name in the Trinity. The administrator then lays his hands on the head of the kneeling candidate and offers a brief prayer on behalf of the one baptized, and he rises to be greeted as a brother, with the right

hand of fellowship and the kiss of love, to walk in newness of life.

“The Brethren follow closely the practice of the apostolic church, and admit none into fellowship until they have been baptized. In the language of Peter to the Pentecostians they tell all believers to ‘repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.’ Acts 2:38. Holding that baptism is only for believers, and those who have repented, they oppose infant baptism. Infants can neither believe nor repent, hence they are not proper subjects for baptism. Christ having sufficiently atoned for them, all children who die before coming to a knowledge of good and evil will be saved.

“In defense of trine immersion they hold that the great commission, given by Christ, and recorded in Matt. 28:19, Revised Version, ‘Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,’ teaches a three-fold action. As there are three persons in the Trinity, each one of the Divine Three is honored in this form of baptism. As the three Persons constitute one God, and a belief in each of these one faith, so the three dippings constitute one baptism. In favor of their practice they have the testimony of all Greek scholars, who have examined the subject, the practice of the entire Greek church, and reliable history. These all show that trine immersion was the almost universal mode of baptism for centuries succeeding the apostolic age. Changes were gradually made from trine immersion to sprinkling, but the church that made the change, the Roman Catholic, still retains the three actions in applying water to the candidate. Nearly all the Protestant churches that practice sprinkling retain the same form, thus testifying to the truth that the commission teaches a three-fold action in baptism. Their baptism is accepted as valid by all religious denominations of any note whatever.



## “LOVEFEAST AND COMMUNION.

“*The Agape, or Feast of Love.*

“The evening before his death, our Blessed Master, after having washed his disciples’ feet, ate a supper with them and instituted, in connection with this sacred meal, the communion—the bread and cup. The apostles, led by the Holy Spirit, followed the example of their Great Leader and introduced the *agape* into the apostolic church. This feast of love, of which all the Christians partook, was a full meal, was eaten in the evening, and is called by the apostle Paul the Lord’s Supper. The communion of the bread and wine was given in connection with this meal. The lovefeast was kept up in the primitive church for four centuries, but as the church grew in numbers and wealth, it lost its first love and spirit of fraternity, and the feasts of love were discontinued. The Brethren, in their reformatory movement in 1708 restored these lovefeasts, and in this particular still follow the example of Christ and the practice of the apostles and primitive Christians, and keep the feast of love. A full meal is prepared and placed upon tables, used for that purpose, in the church, and all the members partake of the supper.

“*Feet-washing.*

“Before eating supper, the religious rite of washing feet is observed. Their authority for this practice is found in John 13; 1-17. ‘He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. \* \* \* If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.’ The Brethren do not stand alone in the practice of this rite. The Greek church, with ninety million communicants, has adhered to feet-washing, as she claims, ever since the days of the apostles, and the patriarch of Jerusalem engages in feet-washing to-day near the spot where Jesus himself gave the example and the precept.

“In their practice of the ordinance of feet-washing at love-feast occasions the Brethren follow very closely the example of the Master. Water is poured into a basin, a brother girds himself with a towel and washes and wipes his brother's bared feet, and in turn has his feet washed. The rite is in this way performed over the entire congregation. The sisters wash the sisters' feet and all the proprieties of the sexes are most rigidly observed. By this ordinance the Gospel principle of humility is set forth and by its observance all are placed on a common level. The rich and poor stand alike together in the great Brotherhood established by Christ.

*“The Supper.*

“After observing the ceremony of feet-washing, a blessing is asked upon the simple meal spread on the tables, and it is eaten with solemnity. It is held to be typical of the great supper at the end of the world, when Christ Himself will be master of ceremonies. The important lesson is taught that we are all children of one common family, members of one common brotherhood, having one common purpose in view, and the bond of fraternity and loving fellowship is shown by eating together this sacred meal as did Christ and His disciples and as did the primitive Christians. At the conclusion of the meal thanks are returned and then, as the members are seated around the table, the right hand of fellowship and the kiss of charity are given. The salutation of the kiss of love in worship and in customary greetings, as enjoined by the apostles, is never observed between the sexes.

*“The Communion.*

“The Communion is then administered. This consists in partaking of the bread and wine in commemoration of the sufferings and death of our adorable Redeemer. In the Lord's Supper we are pointed forward to the evening of the world, to the great reunion of the saints. In the communion we are pointed back to the cross. The emblems are passed from hand to hand by the brethren, while the officiating minister breaks the

bread and passes the cup to the sisters. After this a season of earnest devotion follows, and then a hymn is sung and the services are closed for the evening. Love-feasts are held in each congregation usually once or twice each year, but as the members visit from congregation to congregation, during the love-feast season, they engage many times in this service during the year.

“OTHER PRINCIPLES OF FAITH AND PRACTICE. NON-CONFORMITY PRINCIPLES.

“*Plainness.*

“The Brethren claim to be, and are in many respects, a peculiar people. Plain dressing is taught and required, and a general uniformity is observed, but this is regarded as a means to an end. They believe that the New Testament teaches plainness in attire, 1 Tim. 2: 9, 10; 1 Pet. 3: 3, and that by a general uniformity of habit, marked enough to distinguish the church from the world, Gospel plainness may be made a living fact instead of a dead letter, as it has become in many other churches whose discipline strongly insists on plain dressing.

“*Non-litigant.*

“The Brethren are not allowed to go to law with one of their own number, nor with others, without first asking the counsel of the church, and it is rare indeed for a brother to be engaged in a lawsuit. Among themselves differences are adjusted personally, or by the church, in accordance with the Christian law of trespass given by the Master. Matt. 18: 15-20.

“*Non-resisting and Non-swearing.*

“The Fraternity is strictly non-resistant, as well as non-litigant. It is held that Christ is ‘the Prince of Peace,’ that His Word is ‘The Gospel of Peace,’ hence His servants can not go to war and fight. ‘For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.’ 2 Cor. 10: 4. They take no active part in politics, and ‘swear not at all.’ If called upon to testify in

the courts, they simply affirm, without raising the hand or kissing the Bible. In this they literally obey the command of Christ who said, 'Swear not at all. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.' Matt. 5:34-37.

*" Secretism.*

"No brother may become a member of any secret or oath-bound society, the Brethren holding that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is fully sufficient for all the wants of humanity. All the converts who are identified with such orders are required to sever their connection with them before they can be adopted into the family of the Brotherhood.

*" Marriage.*

"The Brethren hold that the marriage bond can only be dissolved by death. Divorce and remarriage are practically unknown among the membership. It is held by some that those who have been divorced for a violation of the sanctity of the marriage vow and remarried before conversion, might be received into church fellowship while their former companions were living, but the rule has been against even this much leniency, and they hold, with Paul, that the woman which hath a husband is bound by law to her husband so long as he liveth: but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. Rom. 7:2.

*" The Anointing.*

"They, in compliance with the instruction of the apostle James, 5:14, 15, anoint the sick with oil. This rite is administered only by the request of the sick. The elders are called and the sick member is raised to a sitting posture. After the officiating elder applies the oil to the head three times, two elders then lay their hands on the head of the sick, and offer a prayer for the anointed one."



## TEMPERANCE.

The positions of the Brethren church on the subject of liquor and tobacco—on her temperance principles—are indicated by the following brief, but clear, statement:

“On the question of temperance and prohibition the Brethren have, for more than a century, given no uncertain testimony. They are one of the oldest temperance organizations in the United States. More than one hundred years ago a decision was passed, forbidding any of the members to engage in the manufacture or sale of intoxicants. They forbid the use of all alcoholic or malt liquors as a beverage, in public or private. They request the members not even to have dealings with saloon keepers. They discourage the use of tobacco, and the rule is that no brother can be installed in office who uses tobacco without making a promise to quit it. All applicants for baptism, who are addicted to the tobacco habit, are advised to abstain from its use before they are received into church fellowship.”

## PART B. CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

On the subject of Church Organization and Church Government, I quote the following from Eld. D. L. Miller, on “Church Government.”

*“Church Government.*

“The Brethren have a republican form of church government. Each congregation is independent in the management of its local affairs, such as the election of deacons, ministers, elders, or bishops, and in matters of local church discipline; but is subject to the entire Brotherhood through District and General Conferences. A number of congregations, usually in the same State, conveniently located, are formed into a District, and these hold annual conferences, to which each congregation sends two delegates, either lay-members, deacons, or ministers. Questions, local to the District, are discussed and settled by the District Conference, but those of a general character are sent to the

General Conference, or Annual Meeting, as it is commonly called. This is also a delegated body. The Districts each elect one delegate, who must be an elder, to serve on the Standing Committee, and each congregation, with a membership of two hundred or less, may elect one delegate. Congregations with a larger membership may send two delegates. The delegates may be selected from the laity or the church officials; the Standing Committee and delegates form the official body of the Conference. Any member present may take part in the discussion of questions, but the voting is confined to the delegates, two-thirds of the votes cast being required for a decision.

“The General Conference is also a great annual reunion for the Brethren. They come together from all parts of the Brotherhood, and it is not unusual for thousands of them to assemble at the place of meeting.

“The decisions of the Conference are to be adhered to by all the members of the church. An examination of the book of Minutes of the Annual Meeting shows that questions referring to church doctrine rarely come before the Conference, proving that there has been a firm adherence to the principles of the Gospel, as originally adopted by the church. But the application of those principles, in special cases, and the best means to carry them into effect, have been subjects of frequent discussion and decision by the Conference. The tendency of the Conference and the annual reunions is to unify the Brethren in all their church work, and it is a fact that there is rarely found so large a body of religious people so closely united on the doctrines and principles to which they hold.

“Elders, ministers and deacons are elected by the church from among her members, such as she may deem qualified for the important work to which they are called. Each member, without reference to sex, has a right to cast a vote. Ministers, after giving full proof of their faithfulness and ability, are advanced to the ‘second degree’ of the ministry. They are then authorized to baptize, solemnize marriage, and make and fill appointment for preaching the Word. Elders, or bishops, who pre-

side over the congregations, are chosen from the ministers in the second degree. No salaries are paid, but poor ministers, and those who are sent out as missionaries, are properly supported."

#### PART C. STATISTICS.

The Brethren church has about 100,000 communicants—of this number Pennsylvania has nearly 20,000. There are 6,000 members east of the Susquehanna. While the entire church emigrated to Pennsylvania, on being driven out of Germany, this State always has had a larger membership than any other. The rest of the membership is widely scattered. There are a few small congregations in New Jersey, a good membership in parts of Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia. These are the principal settlements on the Atlantic Coast. There are no congregations in New England, as may be expected from the difference of language in the first place. There is a mission in Brooklyn, N. Y. There are a few organized churches in North and South Carolina, and one in Georgia, and a few in Florida. Because of the position of the church on the question of slavery, there was little work in the South. As is well known, the Brethren took an advance position against slavery at a very early day. In 1797 the church in Conference action abolished and prohibited slavery, and if members still persisted in the unholy business, they were expelled. This action was taken sixty-six years before the nation abolished slavery. Of late years the work has been spreading south somewhat. Leaving the Atlantic Coast, we find the strongest States in membership to be the following: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska. All the other States and Territories throughout the Great West and Central portions, are represented in the membership. Reference to the mission fields will indicate the membership in foreign countries.

The church has about 2,500 ministers in all departments of her work. There are about 850 organized congregations, with about 1,100 church buildings.

#### PART D. EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS.

I cannot in this connection trace the history and development of the educational system as it exists to-day in the Brethren church. It will be sufficient for the present purpose to name the principal institutions, to show the extent and distribution of the work in the several States. The following is a list of the institutions in existence to-day, arranged chiefly in the order of their establishment :

- |                                     |                   |       |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| 1. Juniata College,                 | Huntingdon,       | Pa.   |
| 2. Mt. Morris College,              | Mt. Morris,       | Ill.  |
| 3. Lordsburg College,               | Lordsburg,        | Cal.  |
| 4. McPherson College,               | McPherson,        | Kan.  |
| 5. Manchester College,              | North Manchester, | Ind.  |
| 6. Bridgewater College,             | Bridgewater,      | Va.   |
| 7. Fruitdale College,               | Fruitdale,        | Ala.  |
| 8. Smithville Collegiate Institute, | Smithville,       | Ohio. |
| 9. Maryland Collegiate Institute,   | Union Bridge,     | Md.   |
| 10. Elizabethtown College,          | Elizabethtown,    | Pa.   |

In addition to these, there are several private institutes and normal schools.

#### PART E. MISSIONARY FIELDS AND FOREIGN WORK.

The General Missionary and Tract Committee controls all the extensive publishing interests of the Church, located at Elgin, Ill., and the income of the said interests is devoted by the committee to Missionary Work at Home and in Foreign Fields. The following list will indicate the fields in foreign countries, as conducted for the Church :



Denmark, Sweden, France, Switzerland, Philadelphia and Smyrna in Asia Minor, and India. All of these countries and places have organized churches. There are at present six missionaries in India, and four more are to sail this month. There is a large Orphanage maintained in connection with the work in India, and this year the Church has sent to that large field, \$20,000 for the famine sufferers.

The General Mission Board carries on work in many fields at home. The publishing house, controlled by the Missionary Committee, publishes the *Gospel Messenger* (the principal organ of the Church), the Sunday-school literature, various books and many tracts.



## INDEX.

<b>APPENDIX</b> . . . . .	141	<b>CATHOLIC Church</b> . . . . .	13, 15
Arndt, Johann . . . . .	13	Codorus Church, History of . . . . .	96
Arnold, Gottfried . . . . .	15	Members, in 1770 . . . . .	97
<b>BECKER, Peter</b> . . . . .	23	Conestoga Church, History of . . . . .	89-90
leader . . . . .	27	Members, in 1770 . . . . .	91
Becker, Peter, Missionary Tour . . . . .	43	Conewago Church, Little, History	
leader . . . . .	73	of . . . . .	97
Bermudian Church, History of . . . . .	100	Members, in 1770 . . . . .	98
Members, in 1770 . . . . .	100	Conewago Church . . . . .	99
Beissel, Conrad, baptized by Elder		Members, in 1770 . . . . .	99
Peter Becker . . . . .	47	Coventry Church, History of . . . . .	84-86
His History and Wanderings . . . . .	53-56	Members, in 1770 . . . . .	88
At Conestoga . . . . .	56	Ministers of . . . . .	87
The Foundations of Monastic		Crefeld . . . . .	72
Commune . . . . .	56	<b>DUBOIS, Abraham</b> . . . . .	23
His Companions leave . . . . .	58	Life of . . . . .	83
Fellowship in the Brethren		Dunker, see Brethren.	
Church . . . . .	58	<b>ECKERLIN, Michael</b> . . . . .	23
The Congregation divided . . . . .	59	Edwards, Morgan, Account of	
Re-baptism and Separation . . . . .	60	Brethren Congregations, in 1770 . . . . .	102
Character of his Doctrine . . . . .	61	Exodus from Germantown . . . . .	78
Boehme, Jacob . . . . .	14	<b>FALCKNER'S Swamp</b> . . . . .	28
Bony, Andrew . . . . .	20	Felbinger, Jeremias . . . . .	15
Bony, Johanna . . . . .	20	Fetter, Lucas . . . . .	20
Brethren, Name . . . . .	11, 12	Francke, August Hermann . . . . .	15
Origin . . . . .	12	<b>GANTZ, George B.</b> . . . . .	23
Organization . . . . .	17	Germany . . . . .	12
The Baptism . . . . .	20, 21, 22	Germantown . . . . .	28, 29
First Members . . . . .	20	Church, in 1770 . . . . .	81
Emigration to America . . . . .	25	Members . . . . .	81
Persecution . . . . .	26	The Mother Church . . . . .	113
Settlement . . . . .	28	History of the present location . . . . .	116
Gathering the First Fruits . . . . .	31	The Old Folks' Home . . . . .	129
Baptism and Love Feast . . . . .	31-38	The Old Church . . . . .	131
Results . . . . .	39	The Weaver Log House . . . . .	134
Missionary Tours . . . . .	43	Select School . . . . .	134
Second Emigration . . . . .	51	The Cemetery . . . . .	136
Germantown Brethren . . . . .	113	Alexander Mack, Jr. . . . .	136
Industry . . . . .	104	Mack Family . . . . .	140
Faith and Practice . . . . .	141		
Statistics . . . . .	150		

- Graby, George . . . . . 20  
 Greatswamp, in 1770 . . . . . 83
- H**OCHMAN, Ernst Christoph . . . 15  
   Holtzappel, Henry . . . . . 23
- I**NDUSTRIAL Life . . . . . 104  
   Industries . . . . . 106, 107  
 Introduction . . . . . 9
- K**ALKLÖSER, J. H. . . . . 23  
   Kipping, John . . . . . 20  
   Johanna . . . . . 20
- Koch, Stephen . . . . . 23, 75  
   His Visions . . . . . 76  
   Goes to Ephrata . . . . . 78
- L**ANDIS, Henry . . . . . 32  
   Lang, Frederick . . . . . 32
- Libe, Christ . . . . . 23  
 Luther . . . . . 13  
 Lutheran . . . . . 15
- M**ACK, Alexander, Sr., History  
   of Brethren . . . . . 17  
   Baptized . . . . . 20  
   Leader . . . . . 25  
   His Leadership in America . . 62  
     Birth, 63; Occupation, 64;  
     Marriage, 64; Life-work, 64;  
     His Character, 69; Removal,  
     69; His grave, 70; His Seal . 71  
   The Loss of the Churches . . 74
- Mack, Anna Margaretta . . . . . 20  
 Mack, Alexander, Jr. . . . . 136  
 Mack Family . . . . . 140
- Mayle, Jane . . . . . 32  
   Jam. . . . . 60
- N**ASS, John . . . . . 23
- O**CUPATIONS . . . . . 106, 107  
   Oley, History of . . . . . 28, 88  
   Members, in 1770 . . . . . 89
- P**ALATINATE . . . . . 19  
   Pietism, Best Sense . . . . . 15  
 Pietists, History of . . . . . 14, 16
- R**EFORMED, Reformation. . . 13, 15  
   Reaction . . . . . 72
- S**CHWARTZENAU . . . . . 19  
   = Skippack . . . . . 28
- Spener, Philip Jacob . . . . . 14  
 Stony Creek Church, History of . 101  
   Members, in 1770 . . . . . 101
- Swatara, Big, History of . . . . 93  
   Members, in 1770 . . . . . 94
- Swatara, Little, History of . . . 94  
   Members, in 1770 . . . . . 95
- T**ROUT, J. H. . . . . 23  
   Tulpehocken, (Northkill), His-  
   tory of . . . . . 95  
   Members, in 1770 . . . . . 96
- U**RNER, Martin . . . . . 32
- W**HITE OAK Church, History of . 92  
   Members, in 1770 . . . . . 93















